1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

One night "unknown persons" changed the course of the spring and the water was diverted toward Papadates.

As Kerasovo villagers conferred in the village square, forty villagers from Papadates, armed with stones, assaulted the fringes of Kerasovo.

A general alert was sounded. Hoes were taken from the barns of Kerasovo, knives from the kitchens and hand grenades — relics of the Greek civil war — from various hiding places.

Meanwhile, armed reinforcements arrived from Papadates. Policemen fired into the air to intimidate the enraged villagers, but no one paid any attention.

A few hours later two infantry companies arrived from the nearest town and imposed martial law. Two teen-age girls died from injuries received during the battle. (*New York Times*, September 9, 1954)

The storks like to nest in a village around which there are watered meadows or even marshes. In the village of Almyros, between Lamia and Volos (in Thessaly), a family of storks had built a huge nest of mud and twigs around the cross on the top of the church. "You see," the peasants of Almyros say, "his nest on that spot shows that the stork is a blessed bird." Pharsala, on the main route between Athens and Thessalonike, stands out as a town especially favored by the storks whose coming is considered a good omen. In Epirus and Macedonia and Thrace the evening silence is often broken by the rattlelike noise which this bird makes with his red beak — his white plumage gleaming in the waning sunlight and his long legs silhouetted against the sky. The storks are to the plains what the eagle is to the mountain, one a bird of the lowlands which builds his nests in the chimneys of village homes with people all around, and the other a bird of the heights preferring solitude and willing to pit himself against nature's angriest moods.

Mountains versus Plains

Mountains and plains take on social meaning as people try to gain a living from them. In Greece people frequently speak of "mountain villages" and "plains villages" as though their residents differed from each other. As a matter of fact, both in physical appearance (location, house types, and land use) and in accessibility, the plains and mountain villages are distinct and will be described more fully in a later chapter.

K. D. Karavidas, of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, has for a long time been interested in this problem and points it up by telling an anecdote:

This happened in a mountain village in Central Greece near the Gulf of Corinth. Every year these people would come down to the plains, work fifteen days, and get beans and wheat to carry them through the year. During the German occupation, however, the prices of food went so high that the plains peasants decided to do their own harvesting. They took the produce, which

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241 before they left had cleaned us out and we had nothing with which to do our farming. I tried to get into a technical school, for there isn't enough work for me to do here; I also tried to get into a factory in Salonica but the same favoritism worked there."

He looked bitter and tired.

"Did you sell your tobacco for a good price?"

[426] "Yes, I did get 7,000 drachmas for my tobacco but I was already 5,500
[435] drachmas in debt. And for the crop I am now putting in I'm already heavily in debt. What does the price of tobacco matter when sugar is going up from 16 to 20 drachmas an oka? Today there is not an oka of sugar in Al-
[464] strate for use in case of sickness. There is unemployment, not enough fields; we can't rent any more land, for soil is too expensive. How can I live? If I could, I would emigrate anywhere. I don't care where. It would be a better life."

This young peasant's dark view of his world in 1953 was due to much more than the fact that he had only one horse and had to wait restlessly while a neighbor was using it in a team. He was representative of the young village people who are uprooted because of lack of economic opportunity at home or elsewhere and who become psychologically dispossessed. No matter how willing they are to work, or how hard they do work, they have neither enough bread nor enough security.

Not far down the road we stopped to talk to an elderly couple who, with
[249] one of their three unmarried daughters, were chopping out the weeds from
[273] around the anise plants (anise is used for flavoring ouzo, a popular and
[412] potent alcoholic drink in Greece). They were using short-handled hoes, a fact that led to a discussion of their farming methods which more nearly resembled those of their ancient forebears than those of the twentieth century. The description of a Greek village in an UNRRA publication just after World War II might well have been describing them, although the old couple got most of their income from tobacco rather than grain:

[407]
[412] Plows are the major implements used. Crops are cultivated by hand with hoes and harvested with the sickle or corn knife. Grain is threshed by driving livestock over it and the chaff is separated by tossing in the wind. The method of seeding is to plow the land, scatter the seed and plow again. Sometimes the seed is dropped in the furrow and covered by the succeeding furrow. The rate of seeding is very high and at least one-third more seed than necessary is sown.

[462] Primitive methods of cultivation result in many long days being spent in the fields by the women and children — an average of 250 days per year. Often the women carry their babies and small children to the fields and watch over them while working.[2]

Although this old couple complained about not having enough food, showing us that they had only bread and water in their bag, nevertheless

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exhaustion hangs over the incessant labor of these peasants through the fields of Greece at threshing time. And when the onlooker finally sees the combine doing all of the operations at once, he experiences a feeling of relief. It is as if the accumulated work and sweat of centuries begins to be removed from the people who struggle for their bread.

Mechanization has begun to do miracles in the waste lands of Greece as well. One of the agricultural achievements since the war has been the drainage of marshlands by gigantic earth-moving machinery and dredges, thus putting large acreages under rice cultivation for the first time. Here the machine is a mixed blessing, for where rice growing has come with its promise of higher income for the people, it has also meant much heavier burdens for the women to whose lot falls the new task of planting the rice and cultivating it while the men give the orders and manipulate the flow of water.

The machine age has also brought pumps: not the kind powered by blindfolded donkeys or by tired human feet, but the kind that are run by gas engines or, in some places, by electricity. First, heavy drills operated by a semigovernment agency reach down for the water and, when it is found, the pumps are installed. The water is channeled into thirsty cotton fields and vegetable gardens to help raise the agricultural production of Greece up to as much as 37 percent over prewar figures.

Around Larissa, in Thessaly, on the trip with the director of agriculture and on other trips through that area, I had seen the great concentration of mechanized equipment which contrasted sharply with many other areas of Greece where peasants found it hard to get even iron plowshares or new hoes or sickles. In this mechanized area I talked with a man who bought a tractor. Alekos was his name. This is what he told me: "Three years ago I bought a tractor on the installment plan. The first year I did very well, for I could do work for my neighbors after I finished my own work and they paid me a good income. Now six of my neighbors have tractors; owning one is like a craze and I do not have so much work to do for others."

Alekos went on to describe how the wheat of his village had been threshed by machinery since 1925, each farmer bringing his grain to the place where the thresher had been set up, but nobody locally had owned a tractor and the thresher had come in from outside. Since the war, however, tractors had become so popular that they were symbols of social prestige. We told Alekos that we had been much amused by the sight of the peasants going to market in town with their families aboard the tractors and wondered if the higher the tractor the greater the prestige. He smiled and said:

> That is partly true but in the beginning only those who had 250 acres of land could buy a tractor and they needed a medium rather than a small tractor. Now anybody can buy a tractor who can afford one and will try to get one as good as his neighbor's.

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of Alekos, the first few owners get good income from custom plowing, but with many tractors there is not very much supplementary income to go around. These steel horses in Greece plow more deeply, give more leisure, help spread scientific farming throughout the plains, and service an increasingly larger proportion of the 950,000 farms of the land. But with one tractor to every 70–80 farms, it is not surprising that Yannes, the tobacco grower from Alistrate, still waits for his horse so that he will not have to stand idly by while another finishes plowing a field.

The Harvesters of Chalkidike (Macedonia)

Social changes, and especially those connected with mechanization, frequently wear two faces — one bright, the other dark. In Athens I had heard from fellow Americans about the growing use of machinery, the previously mentioned over-all increase in agricultural production to more than 37 percent above the prewar figure, and the steps being taken to rationalize agriculture to an even greater degree. These programs represented not only heavy investments of dollars and drachmas, but also considerable self-sacrifice on the part of American and Greek staff members with a missionary zeal for their work and a willingness to work overtime. There was no question of the need for Greece to become a part of the scientific revolution in farming, but it was at times perplexing to find that little thought was being given to the social effects of this revolution on the people in the rural areas.

Once out in the provinces, away from the bright programs of Athens, I saw the dark face of mechanization. While riding with the director of agriculture of Larissa on the drive previously mentioned, I was somewhat shocked to hear him say that he was glad the recent storm had visited the area.

"Why is that?" I asked. "Doesn't it make it harder to harvest the grain?"

"Yes, that's the point," he replied. "Now it will have to be done by hand in many places, giving work to some of the people from the mountain villages in this area who depend upon the harvesting to earn their supply of wheat for much of the year. Without the bread from this wheat they cannot live."

Again, a nomarch of Thessalonike talked to me of the people displaced by mechanization. He tried to see the good as well as the bad, indicating that machines without any question had raised the yields by putting more land under cultivation and by making better farming methods possible. He, too, however, used much the same words as had the official in Larissa, pointing out that he was glad to see the rains in Macedonia since it meant that harvesting would be done by hand.[6]

One bright June morning found us in Niketas, a small coastal village in Chalkidike where mechanical threshing was in progress on the edge of the

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village. We hired a caique, with both sails and motor, to take us on the three-hour trip to Neos Marmaras, a picturesque refugee village. Hardly were we aboard when a group of excited peasants came to ask if they could go with us. Our one crewman seemed to have no objection so we told them to join us.

Almost at once these lively individuals explained that they were from the village of Parthenon. They had been spending the past twenty-five days helping the peasants around Niketas harvest their grain and were no longer needed now that threshing had begun. Before talking about their work, however, we had to exchange the rites of hospitality. We had spread out a blanket on which we placed a large piece of bread bought just before departure and a portion of white cheese given me by the teacher in the village. Although the peasants looked thin and hungry, they refused our food. One man, carefully eyeing our bread, said, "Here, take some of my bread; yours isn't well done."

Six or seven of the people of Parthenon, sprawled around the blanket while we ate, tried politely to hide their curiosity. Our lunch finished and the purpose of our trip explained to them several times, it became our turn to ask them questions. We started with a woman in her thirties, a widow. She was dressed in a poor cotton dress, was barefoot, wore a kerchief on her head, but her proud look and direct answers were those of an independent spirit. She was obviously very anxious to get back to Parthenon and several times expressed her gratitude for the lift. "Thank you very much. You have saved us four or five hours of walking on this warm day." She had had to leave her four children at home twenty-five days ago and had had no word from them since then, even though her village was only a relatively few kilometers away. Apparently she had gone on working in the harvest fields for winter bread, clinging to the belief that "no news was good news," but her drawn face showed her long concern: "I left them with only a piece of bread to eat. I don't know how they made out."

"How old are your children?"

"My eldest child is fifteen, the next is eleven, and the other two quite young."

"Does the fifteen-year-old take care of the rest while you are away?"

"He would if he could, but he must look after the cows of my brother who is a soldier, and so the eleven-year-old takes care of the younger two."

We learned that there were some relatives living in the village who probably kept an eye on the youngsters but did not assume full responsibility for them.

We were told that these villagers did not look forward to this trip. It is a trial, an ordeal that must be endured if they are to have any bread, for the men cannot find work in Parthenon that will provide them with money to buy bread.

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own tape to measure just how much he had harvested so there was little likelihood that they would be short-changed. "But don't you often work as a group in a field? How do you measure the individual share in that case?" "Then the owner will say that the field is twenty stremmas in size and that he will give so much per person per stremma for doing that field. An agreement is reached and we all get to work." When they return for their wheat they will have to find some way — by donkey and by caique — of getting it back to their village on the heights overlooking the sea.

It seems that the people of Parthenon do not follow any set pattern in late May or early June when they go to help with the harvest. Individuals or small family groups are independently "on their own"; they go wherever there seems to be a demand for their services; and each individual, a woman as well as a man, is entitled to keep or dispose of the grain earned as he sees fit. In some mountain villages where there are many unmarried girls they often are sent by the families to do this work and are expected to bring back their earnings to the family. Groups of such young people always have a festival air lacking when the middle-aged people have to leave their home village and put in long hours in the field. "We also work with the moon," interjected one of the women who had said little up to that point, indicating that working hours were not from sun to sun but went on far into the night as long as people could see. And light was necessary, for there was danger of accident when wielding the razor-sharp sickles which each worker provided for himself.

There was a crescendo of excitement as we approached Neos Marmaras, our destination. The peasants could see their village of Parthenon far away on the slopes above. They pointed it out to us, asked us to come and visit them and, when we were forced to decline, thanked us profusely for the wonderful favor we had done them. As usual, they had no idea of the help they had rendered me in trying to understand the economic significance to them of this annual trek to the plain to help with the harvest. When mechanization runs its full course and the bulk of the grain is harvested by combines, these people will face the problem that now confronts many thousands of village families in the mountains bordering Thessaly where their services are no longer needed.

Social change is inevitable in the face of an ever-expanding industrial revolution that reaches even to the isolated mountain valleys of ancient Greece. We can only hope that along with the spread of mechanization there will be imaginative social policies to keep man the master rather than the victim of the machine, taking into account the inevitable shifts in type of labor and sources of income in areas where hand labor is no longer needed. The peasants of Greece, with their readiness to tackle whatever is new, would be the last to want to turn back the clock, but they do have a right to wonder where they are to get their bread.

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Harvesting Olives in Southern Greece

During my travels in Greece I have passed countless olive trees, for they hug the coasts, crowd the islands, and thrive inland where the climate is mild enough. But I never really understood the significance of the olive tree until I visited an estate in Southern Greece where three thousand trees of about seven varieties provided the only income.

I had already learned that over 12 percent of the caloric intake of the Greek people came from olives or olive oil; that Greece produced in 1948–1950 an annual average of 47,000 metric tons of table olives, chiefly in Thessaly and Central Greece; that the smaller oil olives, grown elsewhere in the country, accounted for 103,000 metric tons annually of this precious oil, which was bought and stored as a financial reserve whenever the currency became the least bit shaky. The oil olives also produced another 12,000 tons of residue oil. Friends had said that olive growing was a story of "from rags to riches," since one year might bring an outstanding crop and the next a disastrously poor one,* but that this was one of the accepted features of growing olives.

Some inquiring students think the olive was in Greece before the goddess Athena, with whom it is so closely associated in myth, and was originally associated with the cult of Erechtheus. Be that as it may, the olive — the "All-Dewy One" — has held a special place in the tradition of the Greek people. They have also come to know that olive growing is much more than storytelling or the writing of descriptive poetry; it is hard work. In Thessaly, around the Gulf of Volos, it was interesting to watch men plow underneath the trees and fertilize the soil to increase the olive crop; to see on the western coast of Greece and in the Peloponnesos how the peasants irrigated the fifteen to twenty trees that each might own, thereby adding to the quality and the size of the fruit. In Attica one could watch the men expertly trimming the tree so that it would bunch as it grew, making harvesting a simpler task. In the Ionian Islands, where the air is humid and growth more lush, the trees reached much higher, causing the people there to wait for the olives to fall after ripening rather than pick them directly from the tree. "A lazy man's way," said a mainland peasant.

Like many things of importance, the olive harvest has a slow beginning. In October, walking through the olive groves of this estate, one could see the table varieties beginning to ripen. The Kalamata olive was one. At first, the few workers on the estate gather the olives falling to the ground, but within a week's time they begin to gather some from the trees. It is then that the girls from the surrounding villages make their gay appearance. Not many are married, for this would show that their husbands were

* Compared to the 1959–60 figure of 156,000 tons of oil, 1960–61 showed 75,000 tons.

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[Harvesting Olives]

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[464] not supporting them. But for the unmarried this is a rare opportunity to earn some money for the family budget, or even more important, to get money for the dowry that each would-be bride must accumulate.

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46! To follow the workers through their daily round of labor, one gets up long before sunrise and walks with them in the darkness from their village homes to the grove. Each girl carried a little bundle of food with her to
[264] last her through the day. Later repasts showed that the bundles contained a variety of foods, such as fried *marida* (small fish), cheese, bread, an onion, or brined olives. A very few had meat balls, but only once a week. A donkey brayed as it heard the people going by; the air was chilly and bracing, and birds were beginning to wake up in a nervous twitter. Once at the grove, the mild-mannered foreman assigned the girls to their tasks for the day. They put their bundles down in a place where inquisitive dogs would not molest them and set off in twos either to gather the olives that had fallen during the night or else to pick them from the tree. When they could reach no higher in "cleaning the tree," as they called it, they took long-handled
[412] rakes and "combed" the tree.

"Why do you use rakes instead of the reeds such as people in other villages use? Aren't the reeds much lighter?" The foreman explained that those who used reeds really beat down the olives, and in doing so broke many more twigs than those who used the rakes. This would endanger the next year's crop, since the new olives would grow on the sprig which extended beyond the olives formed for harvesting this year.

The girls all wore bags around their waists which they filled and left for the men to collect that day. From time to time, as the young men came to
[832] collect the sacks, they would banter good-naturedly with the girls. One could trace the path of the boys by hearing the interruption they caused in the girls' singing and the self-conscious giggles that took the place of the songs. Under many of the trees burlap cloth placed there facilitated the gathering and kept the olives which fell from getting dusty and lowering the quality of the oil.

About 9:30 the whistle from the olive mill announced that time had come
[264] for a break. During this half-hour rest period, the harvesters ate a small snack from their bundles, usually staying together in partners as they had
[466] been assigned. Apparently the foreman knew the girls very well, since he was able to assign a slow picker to work with a fast picker; he also took into account the way the girls got along with each other, but gave efficiency in
[264] picking the first consideration. After another two hours of work, between ten o'clock and noon, the hour-long lunch period began. At this time, each
[521] girl gathered with her closest friends in intimate groups to exchange gossip about family affairs, to tell about their dreams, or to express an opinion about some eligible bachelor in the village.

Lunch out of the way, the original work partners got busy again. Fast

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

233 to 500 before the war. Rent is usually paid in milk, in an amount equaling
427 the grain needed to seed the field pastured. If it takes normally 500 okas
of seed (23.5 bushels) to put in the crop on the area rented, then the
246 shepherd will pay 500 okas (1410 pounds, or 169 gallons) of milk. The land available has usually been in a crop the year or two before, but is allowed to lie fallow this one year and is thus free for pasturage. Only three or four Valtetsi families have been able to buy their own land down below, but they too bring their flocks back to Valtetsi in the spring.

434 As very little farming can be done on the steep and rocky hillsides
464 around Valtetsi, many of its people, like those from Parthenon, go to the
[321] plains below in June to help harvest the grain. In the late fall and winter,
[465] while pasturing below, some of them help with the gathering of the olives. They are usually paid in kind for such work, an important way of eking out their annual food supply. Other income, of course, is derived from the sale of milk, cheese, wool, and an occasional live animal. Most of the
426 shepherds are in debt to two outside "grocers" (whom they also call
452 "outsiders" or "foreigners"), who advance the equivalent of about $33 to
578 a shepherd against the following season's milk products and agree to the retirement of the debt at a fixed price per oka of milk or cheese. The price
[609] is said to be put so low that the grocer seldom loses, but if there is a rise in price he absorbs all of the profit, further disgruntling the shepherds indebted to him. Some of the conversation went like this:

"We had a bad winter this year. The pastures were not good because it didn't rain. We had to buy fodder to carry our flocks through and thus became heavily indebted to the grocer."

"Yes," added another, "the government shouldn't let these grocers exploit us so."

[474] "But," we asked, "why don't you form a dairy cooperative like some
[157] other villages and market your own milk products yourselves?"

"Oh, we could never get together on anything like that," said one, and all the others shook their heads affirmatively. And they then smiled half-ashamedly and yet amused at themselves when a city Greek pointed out to them, "Why are you then blaming the government when you have just admitted that the fault lies in your own individualism and your failure to cooperate?"

233 As a flock passed through the village on its way to be milked after a
533 morning in the fields, I began to ask about the bells, whose assorted sizes made a peculiar and not unpleasing harmony as the animals hurriedly moved homewards. Then the Valtetsi shepherds confirmed what I had been told before — that the selection of bells is one of the tasks the shepherd takes most seriously. He goes to one of the metalworking shops in the market town and picks out a very deep bell with a pleasing tone. This he

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the men more and more dependent upon them so that a woman has to be relied upon for almost everything that occurs around the farm and in the home. Since the man is much more dependent upon the woman than she on him, the woman is actually dominant. She may refuse or accede to her husband's sexual advances. Proof of man's dependence and of woman's contentment with the status quo is shown, one might argue, in the fact that many of the village women, as much as, if not more than men, have resisted any effort to shift their present status. Most men maintained, however, that this argument, though clever, was not really true and that they had the responsibility for giving orders around the house. Some also pointed out that the new farm machinery was making the man less dependent upon the women in the fields.

Many Greeks look upon the subordinate position of women as archaic, behind the times, and ill adapted to the Western country that is the cradle of democratic traditions. A cotton merchant from Athens, who traveled all over Greece, noted that the conventions are changing and that "women are much more free nowadays and not so much put aside. Formerly they would serve the men and not be allowed to sit with them." He attributes this betterment of woman's lot "to education and to the war which has allowed contact with other nations. In the old days the woman was not allowed to work outside her home and was considered 'fast' if she did; nowadays there are thousands of women working in industry. That gives them a financial independence, which is why the women in the small towns are much better dressed than they used to be."

A further conditioning factor in the shifting status of women is the influence of the Asia Minor refugees of the 1920s, which has already been mentioned. Many of these refugees brought with them a family pattern where the wife had much more initiative and participated more fully in family decisions. This contrasts with many of the families native to Greece, where the women are more restricted and are reluctant to express an opinion if the husband is present.

The nomarch of Thessalonike emphasized the differences in the two population groups, pointing out the greater freedom of the refugee woman. He also characterized her as warmer and more sensual. He brought out the fact, reinforced by home economists from Northern Greece as well as from Attica, that the home-economics programs succeed better among the refugee villages where the woman is able to dispose of her time as she likes, without permission from her husband. He even characterized the refugee village as a gynecocracy, since those men will consult their wives before selling anything, whereas the autocratic men of the nonrefugee village might consider that beneath their dignity. Such men in Chalkidike (Macedonia) even go so far as to send their wives to make a request of the nomarch, particularly when they do not expect the nomarch to act favorably, for it

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Before

Easter the wife whitewashes the house, the wall around the yard, and the oven, even pressing her husband into service should this be necessary. She strings tobacco leaves in late summer; she also strings peppers and onions to hang under the eastern eaves or on the door post. After the shearing is done in the spring, she is anxious to get the wool washed and hung up to dry in festoons around the yard; she dries beans on a blanket out in the yard or, if she lives in Southern Greece or the islands, uses the cement cover of the cistern for the beans as well as for drying figs and almonds.

The so-called home or house animals — one or two sheep or goats, which are often petted, and the donkey — are under her supervision much of the time, although the man on his way to the fields may take the smaller animals with him and stake them out to graze. The women also have full responsibility for poultry except around Attica, where commercialized poultry raising also absorbs the attention of the men. Caring for the swine and a family cow, should there be one, is a woman's job. But the men will assume responsibility for a herd of cows, a flock of sheep, the oxen, or any horses. When new homes are built, special stables for these animals are provided in the yard. The women are busy, as would be rural women anywhere, when a pig is slaughtered. As a matter of fact, every member of the family usually participates in some stage of the proceedings, looking upon it as a gala occasion, more fun than work.

Although gardening is looked upon as woman's work, the man usually prepares the soil and leaves the planting and cultivation up to the woman. Nor is he apt to help when his daughter goes out with a neighbor woman to gather acorns for the pigs, even though it means that one of the women has to spend most of the afternoon up in the trees shaking down the acorns to the woman below.

Woman's participation in field work is gradually changing throughout much of Greece. In Polygyros, the chief city in the Chalkidike Peninsula, the men proudly point out — as they do in Crete — that women do not work in the fields. More and more the men are taking over the field work and the cutting of wood, in which they formerly expected the women to help. One still will see many women out in the fields chopping cotton or planting rice, with a man — apparently directing them — sitting down in the shade. As the Bishop of Messenia pointed out, many of the women working in the field are widows, or their husbands are away at work, at the market, or perhaps sick. He thought that the Greek women working their own land were better off than American women employed in factories, although the Bishop did not know that one third of the Greek labor force insured under sickness and pension plans (which means paid employees covered by government regulation) was made up of women.[12] At harvest time, too, the women wield their sickles day in and day out in areas where the mechanical harvesters

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have not reached. They also help in the gathering of olives, grapes, and many other products requiring patient labor.

The woman is increasingly being viewed today as a supplementary source of labor in the fields, to be employed only when the need is urgent, although regional variations are still important. When she does go to the field, she may take the baby and the small children along and care for them as she works. Various explanations are offered for this lightening of field labor by women. Today, more of the village women have seen how the city women live and have resolved to put city ways into practice in their homes and villages. Furthermore, men seem to be showing more interest in their farms due to the help the government is giving in providing fruit trees, opening up of farm-to-market roads, and helping the peasant participate more actively in the national economy. Agricultural and home-economics extension workers, who now visit the majority of villages, not only tell the men that it is their job to do the field work, but they also show the men better methods for reducing the work load. Where tractors exist, the woman is relieved of much field work and can occupy herself with other tasks. She works more on her loom, takes care of her children, and cleans her house. She also has more time for gardening on a plot fairly close to the house. One recognizes the need for this in a place such as Ioannina (Epirus) where peasants in the outlying villages, with plenty of land near their house, buy at the city market vegetables which they could have grown at home if the women had had sufficient time.

[464] [854] [855] [369] [654] [491] [242] [438]

Keeping the Family Well

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Work, however, is not the only responsibility of a Greek housewife. Any ailing person becomes the immediate concern of the mother or the mother-in-law, with the older woman usually considered wiser in the mysteries of folk medicine. The patient also becomes the concern of the neighbors for, as one man put it, "when somebody gets sick, everybody goes to visit him and to look after him." For quite understandable reasons, the living standards of rural Greece are far below those found in Athens or in most countries of the West. Consequently, health practices, many of them surrounded with superstitions, are the outgrowth of the experience of people who for centuries have faced pain, illness, and death without the benefits of the accumulated medical discoveries of the modern world.

[462] [574] [511] [369]

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Indeed, for much illness the peasant has a supernatural rather than a scientific explanation. As one writer has put it:

> The whole of popular medicine is based upon the knowledge of charms and incantations. Many simples and drugs are of course known and employed; but it is still generally believed, as it was in the old time, that "there would be no good in the herb without the incantation." For the most ordinary diseases are

[755] [757] [776]

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articles of clothing, such as undergarments, which the rude looms cannot suitably fashion. Women have been urged since early childhood to get up at break of day and work on these trousseaus for themselves or for their daughters long before it was time to go out to the fields.

Most families have a common fund from which expenditures are to be made for dowry items. From time to time, husbands and wives quarrel over the use of further funds for the dowry, since the man will claim that the daughter already has enough household items and linens or sufficient sovereigns, but the wife will not agree. As the girl approaches marriageable age, most people in the village have a shrewd way of sizing up just what dowry she will bring, and the local girls are even roughly ranked along this line. Nevertheless, in discussing the desirability of some young woman, people are quick to mention her family background, what a good worker she is, and other personal qualities which may favor her. A girl will start accumulating her dowry as a serious pursuit from her tenth year on, but no final decision will be made as to the exact amount of land or money she will bring to her husband until some young man seeks her out, or the family begins in earnest to try to marry her off. Family fortunes can vary too much to permit a decision of this sort very far in advance. At times, the exact amount is the subject of bargaining, for the young man may ask for whatever sum he wants and the young woman's parents will tell what they can give. If a mutually satisfactory sum is reached, then the engagement is announced.

In those villages where there are active contacts with some city, the family may find it necessary to send a daughter there to help earn her dowry (for instance, if there are three daughters in a family). As early as eight years of age, she may be sent to some relatives and gradually accumulate a sufficient sum from her meager wages. Some parents may borrow money for the dowry from some richer relative without interest, but seldom from outsiders. If necessary, too, they may sell some land to get the required amount. Now and then a well-to-do man may arrange to marry a girl without demanding a dowry and this gives the village something to talk about for quite a while. Or some young men were encountered, particularly in the Peloponnesos, who fall in love with a girl and then try to find out a way to get a house built even though the girl has no dowry. Such variations illustrate that, even in a society with patriarchal overtones, one finds in rural Greece the belief that "love will find a way," whether it means persuading recalcitrant parents to give their permission or accumulating the wherewithal to buy a house so one can marry. And although there are mercenary overtones to any dowry agreement, it is the general rule that parents are trying to look out for their daughter's welfare to the best of their ability, that they are anticipating the in-law relationships — very important in Greece — with the parents and relatives of their daughter's husband.

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Kalivi, Attica

were fed to the threshing machine by the girls, who were wearing goggles and what seemed to be gas masks to protect them from the dust. The women also were wiring the bales of straw which were taken away to be stacked. The president of the community told me:

> Anyone who wants to work signs up. Every fifteen days we put on a new crew so that quite a few people are employed and paid. We do have to keep a small permanent crew on the job throughout the threshing season, which lasts about sixty days, but almost every family has a chance to get some benefit. We only do the wheat belonging to the people of our community. We determine by lot the order in which a family's wheat is to be threshed. All the people bring their grain here, for we can thresh it much more cheaply than they could do it with animals.

We then went into the large olive-pressing plant, built in 1948, with a loan of about $30,000 from the Agricultural Bank, and learned how this part of the cooperative's business was conducted. We learned that each family's batch of olives, like its wheat, was processed separately and that it gave 8 percent of the oil to the cooperative, which is a standard amount taken by presses over Greece, plus an extra 3 percent contribution until the machinery is paid for. After that, it will have to pay only 4 instead of the customary 8 percent. When I noticed an icon in the pressing plant, the manager said that they asked the priest in to bless their work at the beginning of the season. Another man in the company remarked, "we like our religion, but we don't like our priests," a comment with which the others seemed to agree.

The more I learned about this cooperative in Kalivi, the more I realized what a shrewd investment the pasture land had been. The cooperative accumulates no money for itself but reinvests all profits into public works or special funds as determined by the directors of the cooperative. For example, a doctor is paid out of a cooperative philanthropic fund in return for looking after the poor of the community free of charge.

In addition to this general cooperative, to which all family heads belong, there are in Kalivi five other cooperatives. First, there is the credit cooperative explained to me as follows: "Since many people here have to depend upon the Agricultural Bank for loans, the credit cooperative gets the money for them and they do not have to make the contact themselves. If a local peasant wants sulphur or insecticides, the cooperative gets all that is needed. The individual then owes the cost to the cooperative. He pays no membership dues. Both men and women belong." It so happened that the president and the secretary of the community, plus three other people, made up the five-man executive committee of this credit cooperative.

Second, there is a livestock cooperative which the owners of the five thousand sheep in the community support. The members number forty,

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651 631 specialists think it undesirable to have over 90 percent of all taxes collected by the national government, as is done in Greece, even though much of it is channeled back through various services to the local communities. At the same time, they admit that there is great reluctance on the part of local authorities to take on the tax-collection function and that in those instances where they do collect local funds they do so inefficiently. Obviously, the golden mean has not yet been found in this delicate area of the relationship between local and central government.[13]

647 When the topic of conversation turns from the services to the officials who carry them out, local informants respond fast and furiously, much of the comment in disapproving tones. I have yet to find a description of Greek life, past or present, that deals very kindly with Greek officialdom. This might be said of many countries, but in Greece the lowly and even high-placed official is beset with so many difficulties that it is a wonder he functions at all. His first problem is the low standards traditionally expected 647 of the civil servant. Most Greeks think that it is perfectly proper procedure for them to bestow a favor upon some official so that he will give their case 662 preference, either in considering it before other cases or in recognizing certain extenuating circumstances in their favor. The law may or may not be abrogated and regular channels set aside, but the irregularities deal quite often with rearrangements and interpretations within the scope of the limits set by the law so that one person gets preferential treatment over others. When one comes face to face with the great number of papers that have to be signed to do even a simple transaction involving governmental authority, one realizes how great is the temptation to bribe or bring to bear some other consideration (such as working through the good graces of a relative of the official) to shorten the red tape and wind up the matter more quickly than usual. Not all officials would condone such measures, but they are subjected to much temptation.

647 A second problem, tied in with the first, is the low compensation which officials receive in the face of increased living costs. Since many [465] ment workers cannot live even modestly on their salaries, they take on [464] other commitments. These part-time jobs cause them to slight their full-time government employment, for which supervision is frequently lax.

Insecurity in the job is a third difficulty for many of the higher officials. [661] The ministries, which in countries like France are run by highly skilled [645] civil servants no matter how many cabinet ministers come and go, are staffed in Greece by people, many quite capable, who are apt to be swept out of office when a new minister comes in. Many, because of sheer competence and skillful legerdemain, manage to survive from one change of ministers to the next, but are never sure that they will weather the next changeover. In some ministries there have been as many as forty different ministers in six years.

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tions to their homeland. Enough time had passed to enable many of them to assess the impact of their encounter with Greek national life, for numerous changes had followed their arrival.

Their resettlement had, in the first place, brought about a national unity not heretofore possible, since Turks and Bulgarians had left Greece (with the exception of the Turks in western Thrace who were permitted to remain because Greeks were allowed to stay in Istanbul), and the Greeks from Asia Minor were now collected in metropolitan Greece. With the exception of Cyprus and perhaps northern Epirus, there was now little ground for irredentism, which has so consistently plagued each of the Balkan states since their creation as independent political units.

A second effect of the refugees' arrival was the improvement of agriculture, especially in Northern Greece, where the refugees chiefly settled, as well as in Crete, where they improved the vineyards. Because they had been uprooted, the newcomers were much more ready to adopt modern farming methods, to use fertilizer and improved seed. They even introduced new crops to the mainland of Greece. This readiness for change at times contrasted sharply with the more apathetic and conservative native villagers.

The refugees, in the third place, helped create a public health service. Many of them settled in the marshy deltas of the rivers emptying into the Aegean Sea, where malaria — to which they had developed no immunity in Asia Minor — wiped out whole villages. Being desperate, they cooperated to the fullest with authorities who were draining the swamps and inaugurating malaria-control measures.

Even more important was the refugees' role in creating new industries, such as rug weaving, especially in urban centers. They brought in skills, including entrepreneurial ability; even the untrained represented a willing labor pool. They had to rely on their wit and skill to survive in this new environment. The same held true for the fishing industry, which at best was at a primitive level in Greece before the coming of the refugees.

One nomarch, long-familiar with the refugee problem, summarized his observations as follows:

> At the time of their coming, we looked upon these refugees as a terrible burden. But they did bring a creative and civilized element. Here in Macedonia, the refugees are a progressive element: in industry, commerce, and agriculture. They are progressive because they have had so many hardships that they are like iron which has gone through fire and become more malleable. Most of the refugees think they have a better life here than they had in their former homes.

This cataclysmic event, resulting from the disastrous Asia Minor campaign by the Greeks, brought not only a large population increase; it also introduced a social transfusion which all observers agree led to a more progressive spirit in Greece.

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178 they have heard. Many of these are not forced on the villagers, nor even urged upon them, but have some appeal which causes men, women, and young people to experiment with them. If they give satisfaction, then they become incorporated in the general social patterns. To trace these changes due to social drift would be a review of what has been written so far, yet the comparison of the descriptions by adults of life in their villages when they were young with what one observes there today indicates that over a period of time innovations, both social and technological, reached these villages, were adopted by the bolder individuals, and were imitated in time by others. Within recent years the tempo of change in rural Greece has been speeded up. The Bishop of Messenia, already referred to in the discussion of religion, observed:

178 511 369 [454]

> People have now raised their standard of living well above their possibility to pay. They want running water in their home, city clothes, and modern furniture. They don't go into debt necessarily to obtain these things, but they have stopped saving as they used to do. When they have money, they spend it; they don't save it. They have made very great strides in education. They all want a road right up to their village so automobiles can reach them; they all want electricity. The changes which would have normally taken fifty years are now compressed into ten.

Greece, therefore, is a good example of the rising level of expectations going on among rural people the world over. Through the "percolation" of ideas and impressions into the rural areas, many people are demanding what the city person has long taken for granted: education, a road to one's door, electricity, and running water.

178 Many factors enter into the decisions by village people to do something new. Population increase or decrease affects life in rural areas. With an increase, the father has to divide his patrimony among more children, with the result that farms get smaller, less efficient, and people approach the poverty line if offsetting measures are not found. With population loss, those who are left have to make many new adjustments.

178 433 464 241 A study made by two Dutch geographers, de Vooys and Piket, during April and May 1957, of two villages in the Peloponnesos showed the connection between population (viewed as labor supply) and social change. The residents of one community, on the edge of the Argos Plain, produce tobacco, olives, and grain, and also raise sheep. The economy is thus transitional, between the economy of the plains and that of the mountains. After analyzing the labor requirements of this community and weighing the gains from introduction of modern farm technology, the geographers conclude:

> A burning question in the under-developed countries is how to *increase prosperity*. As a matter of course, enlargement of the very small holdings would be considered the solution where the agrarian sector is concerned. But even if a

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part of the peasant population could be successfully transferred elsewhere, this would merely cause a shortage of labour in the fields under the present system of exploitation. A great part of the cultivated area would remain fallow and only be used for grazing. . . . In the tobacco villages the problem would be the reduction of the labour peaks in the spring and summer: these require all the labour available and even cause a fairly extensive seasonal migration. Mechanization might bring about some decrease in the April and May peaks. The result would be that more seasonal female labour would be needed for tobacco planting. The labour peak in August is caused by the tobacco harvest and this work cannot be mechanized or simplified. If the holdings are enlarged, more female labour would have to be attracted; on the other hand, however, the production per farm unit of the cash crops tobacco and wheat . . . would be augmented, thus increasing local prosperity.[4]

In the second village studied, one located in the Megalopolis Basin, de Vooys and Piket were impressed by its remarkably deserted appearance. Many houses were unoccupied, abandoned terraces betrayed former vine growing, and bushes had grown up on formerly tilled fields. Why has this come about in a country where land is so scarce?

The agricultural unit was originally based on two cornerstones: growing grain and keeping sheep. Self-sufficiency was remarkably developed; only the sale of surplus products — derived from the sheep — supplied a scanty money income. When finally a money economy penetrated here, the inhabitants reacted to it by mass emigration: especially the younger generation moved away. At first this lightened the population pressures, but when the migration process persisted, it soon became clear that the consequences were serious. The older people eventually died and the land was left to descendants who lived elsewhere. When these heirs lived far off, either in Athens or abroad, they had little interest in such legacies. They neglected the land and permitted the other villagers to use it as common pasture.[5]

The writers conclude that only a radical change in the labor processes (mechanization and simultaneous enlargement of the holdings) and changes in the attitude of the peasants (enabling the founding of cooperative societies, together with the immigration of young families into this region, will turn this area around Megalopolis into a prosperous one. Thus we see the close connection between population shifts, economic trends, and social change.

Another factor affecting change in the village is the family head's economic ability to make the changes he would like. The Greek peasants, though numbering more than half (55 percent) of the total population, receive about 45 percent of the total national income.[6] The per-capita income of the 900,000 farm families runs lower than the national average of $185 per year, a figure permitting only minimal improvements, no matter how strong the desire.

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tional director, H. B. Allen, in his book *Come Over Into Macedonia*. This program also trained Greek personnel, who were later to play important roles in the rural rehabilitation of Greece. With the coming in, under the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, of the American Mission to Greece, staffed and financed to deal with rural problems on a tremendous scale, the Near East Foundation decided about 1953 to end its Greek program in order to concentrate on assisting Near Eastern countries not receiving the support which was being officially extended to Greece by the American government. But one of its final achievements was the elementary, but nevertheless very useful, series of village studies conducted by its staff, to which frequent mention has been made in this book. The Near East Foundation was also instrumental in bringing the first Fulbright professor to Greece — Howard W. Beers, who taught the first courses in rural sociology to be given in Greece (at the Superior School for Agriculture, Athens) and who initiated the village studies just mentioned.

Several references have also been made to the American Farm School of Salonica, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1955. Founded by Reverend John Henry House, and continued by his son, Charles, and daughter-in-law, Ann, the school has been a vital force in the improvement of agriculture in many sections of Northern Greece. Bruce Lansdale, who succeeded Charles House as director, is also seeing to it that the school, through a community-development program, extends its influence even more directly to the villages. One of its activities is to offer short courses for groups of village leaders — priests, community presidents, and others — who come in to discuss how they can improve life in their communities.

Before World War II, the cooperative movement — described in Chapter 10 — sought to raise the economic conditions of the villages. The Food and Agriculture Organization Mission, viewing the prewar record of the cooperatives, cited in its 1946 report that these organizations had pioneered in the development of bucket pumps, tobacco water-storage tanks, and, through financial aid, the development of improved farm practices. Also, the national government had agricultural specialists who advised villagers on farm problems, but the success of these individuals was minimal as compared to postwar developments.

A survey of prewar programs of planned change, therefore, would indicate that either they reached only special areas where pioneering measures were being tried by private agencies or that they covered the country generally but relatively ineffectively through cooperatives and officials of the Ministry of Agriculture. This is not to imply that rural Greece was static during this period; only that it was not yet receiving the impact of planned change that was to characterize the years following World War II.

In turning to these postwar efforts, a selection has to be made from a wide variety of endeavors. The United Nations, for instance, helped in sev-

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eral ways, and one of the most interesting impacts this body made upon the villages was the program promoted by one of their officials, Glen Leet. It was termed *pronoia dia tes ergassias*, often translated "welfare through employment," which made it possible for villagers to work on some useful community project and be paid minimal wages for their labor. This not only brought some much-needed cash into poor areas but resulted also in actual physical accomplishments which people could see and in which they could take pride. This program, of course, was supplementary to the customary "voluntary" or unpaid labor (*prosopike ergassia*), usually ten days, which able-bodied villagers are supposed to contribute to the community upon call of the community council.[8]

Mention has already been made of a few efforts of the American Mission to Greece — whether called Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), Mutual Security Administration (MSA), Foreign Operations Administration (FOA), or International Cooperation Administration (ICA). One of these was the attempt to set up radio receiving sets in the most isolated Greek villages so the people there would feel in touch with the outside world; another was the vast road-building program which has left its mark not only upon the Greek countryside but upon the Greek social structure as well. Physical isolation has been broken down on a scale not dreamed possible in the prewar years.

The American Mission is also largely responsible for the speeded-up mechanization occurring in Greek agriculture in the 1950s. The same holds true for greatly expanded drainage and irrigation projects which increased the production of cotton and rice. To credit the American Mission with these and other developments does not reflect upon Greek ingenuity and desire for progress, for all of these programs were carried out by Greeks and through Greek agencies, but the outside financial and technical assistance had to be present for any large-scale success. A sober evaluation of American aid to Greece is found in a book by that title, written by A. A. Munkman, who was chief of Audits and Surveys of the United States Economic Mission to Greece.[9] While citing the positive achievements, he also inquires into how the two billion dollars supplied could have been better used for the benefit of the Greek people. He deals none too gently with some of the administrative weaknesses and concludes pessimistically that Western influence is steadily losing ground, because the ordinary Greek peasant or worker feels that it promises far more than it fulfills. This goes back, he thinks, to the fact that public opinion is poorly informed about the mechanics of aid.

Without necessarily taking issue with Munkman's conclusion, it is important to point out that, by their very nature, programs of planned change invariably raise peasant expectations beyond the sponsors' ability to satisfy. This need not be a negative fact if the dissatisfaction can be channeled into

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

184 lty; if he has a few acres available to him he knows that he can put in a crop
423 and maintain life; without land he is helpless. That is why many peasants
will insist on buying more land when they get a sum of money. The modern
454 farmer, on the other hand, views land as only one of the factors of production. He can be quite impersonal toward particular patches of land, whereas in some countries the peasants feel closely attached to family acres handed down through two, three, or more generations. Peasant fathers, too, feel a strong sense of obligation to pass on to their children the patrimony of land intact, if possible. At times, this is even more important than providing the children with an education or a respectable dwelling. The modern farmer may feel much more security in the cash balances in the bank or in the improvements made on the land he has rather than the acquisition of more land simply for the sake of adding acreage to his estate.

178 Perhaps the most visible contrasts, as one passes from a peasant farming
241 belt to one of modern farms, is the presence of machinery in the latter.
The peasant relies on family labor to help not only with ordinary daily tasks
594 but as much as possible to meet the needs at peak periods, such as harvest
184 time. Any money given to outsiders who help is that much taken away
from the family exchequer. This means that a peasant with many children
●464 is considered blessed over one with few, for the many sons especially are economic assets, though daughters help until they are married off as members of their husbands' family labor reserve. As Chapter 5 has shown, the purchase of a tractor by a Greek farm family ushers in numerous changes. Arthur Mosher, who is familiar with agriculture both in the Far East and in Latin America, points out the following consequences of shifting from family labor to machinery.[8] First, by reducing the labor requirements it frees members of the family for work in the city and may even necessitate their search for employment away from the village — a fact which introduces change into what may have been a closed family circle. Second, there is sometimes a change in status of the sons and younger men of the family who, unlike the older men, know how to operate the newly acquired machine. In peasant families, where the word of the older people, especially the father, has been law and where there is supposed to be unquestioned obedience to his directives, the emergence of a new technical "authority" in the family is bound to produce changes in the family relationships. A
178 third effect of mechanization treated by Mosher is the creation of greater
241 socioeconomic disparity between large and small farms, since mechaniza-
184 tion is usually more economical on large farms. This tendency of the rich
to get richer and the poor to get poorer is sometimes offset, however, by
[474] the poorer farmers pooling their resources and setting up a small joint-ownership group, similar to some of the threshing "rings" of the American Midwest a generation or so ago. Or the small farmers may get the advantages of mechanization if the machines can be rented to them when needed,

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or if plowing and other operations can be performed on contract. In any event, the introduction of the type of machinery which reduces labor requirements is apt to send people off the farm, whether from the family acquiring the tractor or the poorer farmers who rent their land to a machine owner looking for a larger area to farm.

Another feature mentioned by Mosher is a further distinguishing trait between the peasant and the farmer: namely, the greater dependence of the farmer upon the town. The peasant makes occasional trips to a market town, often as much for the excitement of a change as for the economic benefits he derives. If it were necessary, he could postpone such trips almost indefinitely, particularly if there were other villagers who would buy his surplus crop or a calf or who would purchase for him some necessities from outside. But the man with a machine of a complex sort is dependent upon the repair shops of the town; moreover, he has bought the machine there and is financially tied to the town. To the extent that his children pursue a secondary education, he also develops interests in the center where the school is located. If good roads are built, and automobiles or cheap bus transportation become available, he may even seek recreational outlets in the town.

As the rural people become familiar with town ways, they shift from peasant dress to the more uniform and less colorful urban clothes. It is no longer possible to look at a Greek farmer in town and tell what village or immediate area he is from by the characteristics of his costume; he becomes anonymous and nondescript, indicating the beginning or even culmination of a psychological break with peasant life. Money which would have formerly been spent in other ways now goes for modern goods and garments; more cash becomes necessary to maintain the changing standard of living, and alternative sources of employment have to be found to supplement the income from the farm.

This increased exposure to town usually carries with it heightened exposure to various communication media. In the past, the village has been the peasant's universe; the main currents of city or national life passed him by. But as he becomes a farmer, he visits the supply store in town to hear about prices, new fertilizers, new types of seeds, new insecticides. At the same time, he hears about many other things going on in the world. With the coming of radio to his village, and the occasional newspaper, his distance from town is minimized, but learning from these sources is not quite the same as talking to individuals in the town who claim "to be in the know," whether as well-informed officials or individuals recently returned from the capital city. He also brings back some reading material to ponder over when work is slack. His former mental isolation breaks down.

Such exposure to town influences, along with whatever he learns about government agricultural policies, increasingly involves the peasant in politi-

1:Sanders Z-5,V (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

owners, even having the power to keep the peasants off the land they formerly owned. In Epirus, land redistribution in the 1920s involved finding out who the former Greek owners had been or still were, once the land had been appropriated from the Turks with an indemnity payment. In Thessaly, however, there were no former Greek peasant owners to locate, so the large Turkish-owned estates were merely redistributed to peasants who had worked them as hired workers or tenants.

7. The quotation about the sixth century B.C. comes from *The Cambridge Ancient History*, V, 12.

8. Most of the information on which the description of land tenure in Attica is based comes from P. J. Iliopoulos, *L'Attique au point de vue physique et économique* (Athens, 1951).

9. For a discussion of agrarian conditions in the Byzantine Empire in the Middle Ages, see the chapter by that title in *The Cambridge Economic History*, I.

10. See K. D. Karavidas, *Agrotika* (Athens, 1931), whose sections on the *tsiflikia* and *kephalochoria* proved particularly helpful in an effort to gain a proper background. In a private conversation, Mr. Karavidas pointed out that some acute problems arose when the tsiflikia were broken up and distributed to the former tenants. Under the landlord, the workers were forced to keep irrigation ditches clear, but when redistribution occurred in 1923 nobody worried about the maintenance of such ditches. Trees fell into them and they became stopped up.

11. *L'Attique*, p. 115.

12. One of the best short descriptions of land ownership in Greece is an article by that title in *Foreign Agriculture*, August 1950. The article is adapted from the book by A. Varvaressos, *The Fulfilment of the Agrarian Reform* (Athens, 1949). Another useful account of land reform in Greece is found in W. E. Moore, *Economic Demography of Eastern and Southern Europe*, appendix 3. D. K. Wogasli wrote extensively on questions of land reform, publishing in 1919 a work entitled *La Solution de la question agraire en Grèce* (Athens, 1919). He also wrote a work in Greek on the agrarian question in Thessaly and especially in the prefecture of Trikkala.

It is interesting to contrast Thessaly of today with that described by Leon Heuzey, *Excursion dans la Thessalie Turque en 1858*. Of the village of Vloko, he writes: "Là, je me renseigne comme à l'ordinaire, sur la condition des paysans. Le propriétaire, Hassan-bey, les déplace à sa volonté, bien que lui-même, à l'heure actuelle, tienne un homme en prison pour avoir cherché à quitter son tchiflik. Malgré les nouvelles lois, le régime de la glèbe existe encore, mais ce n'est pas toujours dans les conditions d'équité qui pourraient le rendre tolerable pour le cultivateur" (p. 76).

13. A common practice on the part of a landlord was to transfer title to various parts of the estate to close relatives, who permitted him to continue to operate the farm as one unit.

14. The Agricultural Section of the United States Mission to Greece and officials of the Greek Ministry of Agriculture have given much study to the problem of consolidation of scattered strips. The great amount of time required for surveying even one village for this purpose is hard to believe. At least twenty villages have been surveyed by Dr. Kypriades and attractive picture displays prepared to show what can be done when consolidation is carried out.

15. For more on the domka system, see O. S. Morgan, ed., *Agricultural Systems of Middle Europe* (New York, 1933), chapter by Georges Servakis and C. Pertountzi entitled "The Agricultural Policy of Greece." On the problem of scattered strips, see the *Report of the FAO Mission for Greece* (Washington, D.C., 1947), in which Recommendation 71 deals with consolidation and land redistribution.

16. UNRRA, *Greece, Ripe for Improvement: A Study of Marginal Land Farming in Greece* (Washington, D.C., 1946), p. 9.

17. Frederick Strong, *Greece as a Kingdom* (London, 1842), pp. 163–164. But in 1914 Lucy M. J. Garnett, in *Greece of the Hellenes* (London, 1914), wrote as follows: "It is . . . foreign emigration that is robbing Hellas of her hardy peasantry, and this constitutes one of the most serious problems with which the Hellenic Gov-

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ernment is at the present confronted. For Greece *has no surplus population*, and, if the country is to prosper, the services of every able-bodied man and boy are needed for the proper development of its natural resources. Weekly emigrant steamers carry large numbers to Western lands and bring but few back . . . with the consequence that many agricultural districts are left without labourers to till the soil" (p. 133).

For more on this emigration, see Theodore Saloutos, *They Remember America: The Story of the Re-Patriated Greek-Americans* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956); and Henry Pratt Fairchild, *Greek Immigration to the United States* (New Haven, 1911).

18. The figures used in this presentation of land use are taken from *Greece Today* (August 1954); from Bickham Sweet-Escott, *Greece: A Political and Economic Survey, 1939–1953* (London, 1954); and from data supplied by the United States Department of Agriculture. In these three sources the years differ, as do some of the categories of land use, but the details prove interesting.

19. The study on idle lands made by the American Mission for Aid to Greece appeared in mimeographed form in 1952 and was based on detailed reports turned in by the field representatives of the Civil Government Division of the Mission. The report was issued by William M. Tait, who was then deputy director for field service. Other informants point out that in Epirus, and probably elsewhere, thousands of acres are owned by Greek-Americans in the United States, and Greek villagers do not feel free to make use of such idle lands.

20. For a discussion of these exports, see E. J. Bell, "Greece, Exporter of Farm Products," *Foreign Agriculture*, March 1958, pp. 5–6.

21. The use of lots in dividing up a patrimony among brothers in a Boeotian village is described in an article by Harry L. Levy, "Property Distribution by Lot in Greece," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, LXXXVII (1956).

Chapter V. The Peasant at Work

1. The unpublished manuscript from which this comes is "Ta Laographika tes Kleitorias" (Concerning the Folklore of Kleitoria).

2. UNRRA, *Greece, Ripe for Improvement: A Study of Marginal Land Farming in Greece* (Washington, D.C., 1946), p. 8.

3. Robert P. T. Coffin, *Hellas Revisited*, p. 14.

4. Dr. Charles House, former director of the American Farm School in Salonica, played a great part in preparing the way for mechanization in Northern Greece, since the students at this school were taught how to operate and repair tractors long before they began to appear in so many villages. He said that one argument for the use of the tractor in preference to the draft animal was the fact that the animals ate up too much of the farm produce.

5. For the full World War II picture, see C. S. Stephanides, "Agricultural Machinery in Greece," *Foreign Agriculture*, XII (November 1948), 250–253.

6. Supplementary labor is an important element in the economy of many families and even whole villages. In the Peloponnesos people from the mountain villages can harvest olives and help with the pressing of the oil, receiving pay in kind. When they help with the vineyards they are paid in money, as they are in Macedonia when they help plant tobacco. Near Ioannina there are villages specializing in certain crafts from which many men go during the winter to ply their trades.

7. "A Tobacco Village in Xanthe Nomos," (1952, mimeographed), prepared by A. Argyropoulos. One of the village studies conducted by the Near East Foundation for the Greek Ministry of Agriculture and the United States Economic Cooperation Administration. The following comment about this village (Dafnon) by John D. Photiadis is helpful: "I have served as a county agent in that area and I think that Dafnon is not a representative village. It is considered the poorest village in the area and the most stricken by the reduction of prices of Turkish tobacco. This is because

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jobs in the vineyards must be finished quickly so that the men of the household may turn to plowing cotton fields, those farmers who prefer to start plowing earlier, or who have larger vineyards than the household can handle alone, sometimes hire labor for the hoeing. Sons who are not needed on their father's land may work for others in the village or may go for several days to work for relatives living in neighboring villages. In either case, they are paid a daily wage of between forty and sixty drachmas (thirty drachmas equal one dollar) and get their board as well. It requires three man-days of labor to hoe one *strema* of vineyard. Hiring labor for this is considered expensive. Farmers with fewer land resources may, in order to avoid the extra expense, ask their wives to do some hoeing. Although such a procedure is frowned on in Vasilika, a farmer considers the practical necessities of his situation as more important than any possible loss of prestige. Moreover, village opinion itself recognizes the force of a man's practical needs, and tempers criticism to the nature of the specific circumstances. This phenomenon is characteristic of Vasilika and will be mentioned again.

The vines continue to need some attention from time to time until the grapes have ripened. Wine-making begins in September with the gathering of the grapes. September itself used to be called *triyitis* (the time of the grape harvest). It is an occasion much enjoyed, since men, women, and children all pick the grapes together, talk and joke as they do so, and eat a little of the produce besides. Four or five people can pick the yield of the two *stremata* in a few hours. The pack animals carry baskets of grapes back to the house. After making certain that there are no leaves among the fruit, the men of the household wash their feet and then trample the grapes. The must collects in shallow basins and is transferred to barrels. A sample of must from each barrel (the usual household's yield is two barrels) is taken to a chemist in town to check whether sugar or alcohol or both may be needed. Payment for this service is made according to the weight of the wine the farmer will treat as a result of the chemist's advice. Besides adding the recommended quantities of sugar and white alcohol to the must, the farmers also add enough resin to make up two percent of the contents of the barrels. Resin is sold by vendors who circulate among the villages in trucks during the wine-making season. The resin gives the wine of the Greek countryside its name, *retsina,* and its characteristic flavor. In classical times the ancient Greeks and later the Romans added resin to the must as a wine preservative. It still has this function, but to the present villagers, as to the ancients, the resinated wine has a pleasing taste and, in Vasilika, is much preferred to nonresinated wines. We once started to serve a bottled Greek nonresinated wine in our village home but we were quickly informed by our village guests that it was poor indeed, and one of our visitors left the table to go home to bring a carafe of his own superior wine. Those to whom drinking a mild form of turpentine seems unpalatable at first can develop, as we discovered, a taste for *retsina* and come to enjoy it very much.

Wheat fields are plowed and sown in the fall, in late October and early November. A farmer can plow his wheat fields with a horse or two pulling a

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steel plow, or he can hire a tractor to do the job. The hiring of the tractor includes fuel and the services of a tractor operator.

Two farmers in Vasilika own tractors—one made the purchase in 1952 (a British Ferguson), the other in 1956 (a British Fordson). They were bought on the installment plan with credit extended by the Agricultural Bank of Greece. The tractor operators are a son and a nephew, respectively, of each of the owners. Both of the farmers who purchased tractors have landholdings which are large for the region, perhaps as many as sixty *stremata* but divided into tracts of some ten to twenty *stremata* each. Even if the land were not divided into such small parcels, there would not be enough return on so little land for economically sound use of a tractor. Both the bank management and the farmers are well aware of this, so that credit for the purchase of the machinery is given with the understanding that the owner will use the tractor as a capital investment and earn income from it by renting it out.

Farmers decide to hire or not to hire a tractor for the fall plowing on the basis of practical considerations of the moment. If weather conditions have been normal in the late summer and early fall, a farmer will be more likely to proceed with his horse-drawn plowing. If, however, early rains have delayed the cotton picking and all hands are needed in the cotton fields when the wheat fields should be plowed, a farmer may hire a tractor to be sure that the job gets done before the winter rains. Most of the farmers maintain a horse to use as a pack animal, in any case, so that it is obviously cheaper to plow with the horse. For increased efficiency, two farmers sometimes contribute one horse apiece, so that the team of horses working on each of their fields in turn will get the work done faster and at no additional cost. For wheat, the farmers say, the deeper plowing of the tractor is not important, so whenever possible they work with the animals. For cotton, as we shall see later, they believe tractor plowing increases the yield. Generally speaking, as one might expect, the farmers with fewer land resources tend to make less use of the tractors than those who can expect a good cash income from their fields and so can afford the outlay for the hire of a tractor.

After the broadcast sowing of the wheat (which is done on each *strema* immediately after it has been plowed) and the dragging of the fields, what remains is some light hoeing to be done in February and March, the spreading by hand of some chemical fertilizer at about the same time, and when the weather warms up, the spraying of a chemical weed killer by means of a hand-operated pressure pump. A farmer who does not own such a pump borrows one from a neighbor, and no charge is made for its use.

Harvesting of the wheat crop is done almost entirely by machine in Vasilika. Reaper and thresher combines, with their operators, make the rounds of the Boeotian plains villages at harvest time in June. The threshed wheat is weighed out in the fields and the machine operators are paid promptly with twelve percent of the crop. Chaff and straw left in the fields are collected by the household and made into small packages to be used for bedding down the animals. Each farmer may set aside four or five *stremata* of his wheat field to be reaped by hand with a standard sickle. He then hires a thresher with operator

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since farmers in neighboring villages whose cotton fields lie adjacent to those of Vasilika's pump owners often want to hire the pumps. Here again, the rent income helps to defray the cost of the machinery.

Work is begun in the cotton fields shortly after the winter rains abate in February or March. Like the wheat fields, the cotton fields are sometimes plowed with horses. But, apart from the two farmers who own tractors, a number of farmers believe that the increased yield from the deeper plowing a tractor furnishes is more than worth the cost of renting the machines. Planting is ordinarily done by hand, but in 1956, a few farmers owned machine planters, and several farmers were borrowing them to try them out for the first time. The utilitarian and essentially nontraditional attitude to farming characteristic of Vasilika's inhabitants is illustrated by what one of the farmers had to say about using a machine planter."I've planted half of my forty *stremata* of cotton by hand and the other half by machine to see which will turn out better. It's an experiment, you see." The machine planter must have been better, because in 1961 the same farmer had planted all his cotton by machine.

A few rows of maize are planted in the midst of the cotton fields to provide feed for chickens. Boys and young men like to roast and eat a few ears of corn out in the fields in late August, but corn is not considered proper food for human beings, and eating corn bread is believed to be a sign of dire poverty.

Once the cotton starts to grow, in late May and June, the hoeing begins. This is arduous labor which includes weeding, chopping up the weeds, and arranging the chopped weeds around the cotton plants as a mulch. Hoeing is done by the girls and women of the household, although men sometimes help. If a farmer has as many as twenty *stremata* planted to cotton, it is at this point that he may begin to use hired labor. Generally, the women of the village who are not busy in their own cotton fields are called upon first. These are the wives and daughters of the shepherds and the wives and daughters of the few farmers who have small enough land holdings so that their women have time left over after hoeing their own fields. When these supplies of excess labor are exhausted, farmers turn to relatives and non-kin in the neighboring villages.

The hired women who came from other settlements used to live in the house of the farmer who employed them, and used to be fed by him as well. In 1961, however, the farmers were reporting a system they much preferred—the use of tractors and trucks to bring women from the neighboring villages in the early morning and to take them home again in the evening. This obviated the necessity of housing and feeding four or five girls at a time during several different periods in the course of the cotton growing season (cotton is weeded and hand cultivated at least twice and sometimes three or four times during the season). The women of Vasilika's households were especially pleased at the change, because although they enjoyed having the company of the hired women, who danced and sang in the evenings, they very much disliked the additional work involved in housing them. After a long day in the fields, the farmers' wives and daughters had to prepare a hot evening meal for the work crew and, before dawn each morning they had to pack the bread, cheese, and olives which would provide a morning collation and a midday meal in the fields. The de-

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crease in food costs, in work, and in the inconvenience of having strangers in one's house, were considered, in Vasilika, well worth the increase in daily wage from about forty drachmas in the 1950's to the 1961 wage of approximately sixty.

Even with the release from housing hired labor, the period of cotton cultivation is the most difficult of the year for the people of Vasilika. The weather is hot and often humid as well. Much of the hoeing must be done directly under the hot sun with the hoer bending from the waist to manipulate the short-handled hoes. To protect themselves from the sun and from being scratched by the plants, both the men and women keep their arms and legs covered and shade their faces. The women wear long lisle stockings, their oldest long-sleeved flannel or cotton dresses with high necks, and kerchiefs which they draw around to cover the lower half of their faces. Men and women alike are embarrassed when outsiders see them in their old, worn, earth-spattered field clothes. "See us!" they say as one walks by the fields during this season of the year, "in our rags. What can we do?"

In spite of the weariness and inevitable backaches cotton hoeing brings in its wake, the women must still continue with the ordinary housekeeping chores. Once every week or so, they get up at two or three o'clock in the morning to sift the flour and knead the dough for bread; an occasional day free from hoeing gives them time to do the accumulated family washing and ironing; and each day brings its own complement of bed-making, sweeping, cooking, and dish washing. Although the men have more frequent respites from hard physical work in May and June, both men and women obviously lose all the weight they gained during the less active winter months.

Irrigation, which begins in July, is a man's job. The cotton fields are irrigated twice or three times in the course of the summer, and a farmer and his son can ordinarily manage all the work. If not, the women of the household often help, or the farmer can hire men. But finding male farm labor is more difficult than finding women. Young men, when they reach twenty-one, serve for two years in the Armed Forces, and if a young man is not regularly needed on his father's farm, or has been educated, he is likely to have left the village for a town. Nevertheless, sons of poorer families, whether they attend gymnasium during the winter or not, are available for summer farm labor from the time they are thirteen or fourteen years old.

The task of irrigation consists of clearing shallow ditches into which the water will be channelled, and then channelling the pumped water into them. Men work barefoot and sometimes stand in water up to their knees. Occasionally they work through the night with torches for light, and one gets the impression that the men and boys enjoy such nights for the sense of adventure they give. The need to walk around in the mud and the inevitable spattering of the mud over their clothes and their faces are what the men find disagreeable about irrigation, and once again, they complain of their unsightly appearance.

In October and November, if the weather has been normal, the cotton is picked. This requires a prolonged period of work by many hands, since the plants mature at different times: some cotton is ready for picking each day for a

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period of at least two months. Women are again hired to do the job. But this time, the women from Vasilika and from the neighboring villages who had been free to do the hoeing are not necessarily free to spend away from home the prolonged period required for picking. The local women can and do hire out when they are free, but they can be free only sporadically, for their own fields also need some attention every day, even if their cotton production is not extensive. Therefore, the intermittent wage labor of the neighborhood women is augmented by labor from more distant regions where no cotton is grown, and where the early fall is therefore a slack season in the agricultural cycle. In 1955, six Vasilika farmers took the train to Trikala (near Larissa) and brought back with them thirty women who then worked in Vasilika for almost two months. Each of the farmers took responsibility for five or six women; he paid their round trip fare, put them up in his home, and furnished them with food. As a net wage, he paid them for picking the cotton in his fields one to two drachmas per *oka* (one *oka* equals two and eight-tenths pounds) of cotton picked. A serious, mature worker can regularly pick about forty *okadhes* a day.

In the picking season the farmer's main concern is to finish the job before the winter rains set in. If prolonged rains come early, the value of the cotton is lowered, and the processing of it involves additional expense. If the cotton has to be picked while it is still damp, it must be picked with the pod, and later must be separated from the pod by hand. The farmers paid hired workers a drachma per *oka* for the job.

While the women are picking cotton, the men of the household weigh the filled bags, keep records of the amount each woman picks, and use the horses, donkeys, or mules to haul the cotton from the fields. It is stored in the stone barns, in the lower storage rooms of the houses, and, as a matter of fact, when other space is no longer available, in any room in the house. Trucks from the cotton gins in Levadhia come through the village and collect the cotton. Farmers keep track of the weight of cotton they send to be ginned but do not identify their own sacks. The ginning costs six percent of the original weight of the cotton, a percentage which the gin owner keeps for himself. The farmers use the seed returned to them for the next year's planting, and also have some of it pressed into cakes for use as supplementary fodder for the ewes at lambing time. The cotton itself is again stored in sacks to await sale to merchants who visit the villages. During the season, the cotton is also used as a medium of exchange. Itinerant vendors selling fish or oranges, for example, are willing to take raw cotton instead of cash in payment.

The price at which the farmers sell the cotton to the merchants is never high enough to satisfy the farmers, who feel they get a disproportionately small share of the ultimate value of the cotton. We were once host to some urban visitors and to some of the village's leading men. In the course of the afternoon a heated and eloquent discussion on cotton prices developed. The farmers contended that by the time they paid the costs for machinery, fuel, hired labor, and calculated, in addition, the value of the labor of the members of their households, they made scarcely any profit at all on the cotton. The visitors, on the other hand, insisted that it was wrong to include the labor of their households as part of the

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231 With few exceptions, dogs, like the other animals, are not considered [552] pets. They are not given names and are referred to simply as "our dog." Parents [865] permit young children to play roughly with them and to tease and abuse them as they wish. The animal is fed scraps of bread once a day, and there is a feeling that there may be some advantage to keeping it slightly hungry. The dogs also act as scavengers whenever horses or other large animals die in the vicinity of [178] the village. Further evidence for the completely utilitarian attitude of the [373] villagers toward their dogs is the diminution of the number of these animals in the village since the introduction in 1960 of electric lights on the street and paths of Vasilika.

Variations in Wealth

423 This chapter has dealt with the most important methods of providing 511 subsistence and income in Vasilika from the standpoint of the typical small 592 farm owner. However, all the farming households of Vasilika do not have land or other resources of equal value. Among the thirty-five land-owning households of Vasilika there are perhaps eight whose total holdings range from one to [422] fifteen *stremata* and who own only a few sheep and goats. These households usually own donkeys, however, and occasionally, a mule and some chickens. Along with the four farm households in Vasilika who own no land whatever, [464] these eight are the groups who must find wage labor in the village or in the neighboring communities. The level of living of both these groups is close to what is needed for bare subsistence, and a bad agricultural season leaves them close to destitution.

Another eight households are those of farmers whose land-holdings range from about fifteen to thirty *stremata* and who maintain themselves at what is considered an acceptable standard in the village, but who do so by a narrow margin. In several instances, these are households with children too young either to help in the farm work or to supplement income by wage labor.

Slightly more than half of the total number of farm-owning families—some nineteen—might be considered substantial farmers who may have better or worse years but whose present situation is reasonably secure. The largest land owner in the village has about 150 *stremata*, several men have something like 100, and the rest have holdings of 40 or 50 *stremata*. Forty *stremata* are regarded by common consent as a minimum for a decent standard of living for [422] a farm household of four. Among these farmers, some own enough sheep to get additional income from selling surplus animals, but most have just enough sheep to supply milk, cheese, and meat for household needs. These farmers also have one or two horses.

434 A gross difference in the quantity of property owned is not the only fac- 511 tor effecting the income variation among the households of Vasilika. Soil fertility and drainage conditions are not the same on all the village lands, so some farmers get greater yields from smaller plots of well-situated fields. In addition,

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Specialization of Labor

233 563 [166] [463] [434] Sheepherding as a specialty is relatively new to the village. Eight of Vasilika's ten shepherds and the members of their households are called *Vlachi* by the villagers. Most of these people come from Agrafa, in Euritania, in the northwestern part of the Greek mainland. Their fathers and grandfathers were shepherds, and the present group in Vasilika is the first generation ever to have settled anywhere with the intention and reasonable hope of staying. They augment the income from their own flocks by caring for those of the farmers as well.

233 563 511 434 [464] [262] [342] From the point of view of the *Vlach* shepherd households headed by men (two are headed by widows), the settlement in Vasilika is a satisfactory change in their circumstances. In the years between 1950 and 1956, they had succeeded in building up their own flocks to the point where the sale of sheep, milk, and wool enabled them to have a small cash income to add to the money their women earned as hired agricultural labor. With a cash income, their diet no longer needed to be restricted largely to bread and cheese. The houses of the shepherds have improved since 1956. By 1961, all the shepherds' families were in houses instead of reed huts, and two of them were living in their own newly built one-room brick houses.

233 563 621 555 87 [641] [435] Perhaps most important to the shepherds' sense of well-being is that they have been admitted to citizenship in the *kinotis* of Vasilika, and that their children are receiving an education. The adult men had had to teach themselves and their children just enough reading and writing to be able to keep track of their commercial transactions through the year. Indeed, one shepherd, when asked what he thought about when he was out alone with his sheep, replied that he spent most of the time calculating how many sheep and how much milk to sell under the different possible price conditions of the coming season. What pleases the shepherds in Vasilika is that their children will have, as a result of a more formal education, some opportunities to follow a calling other than that of shepherd. In 1961, one of the shepherd's sons had already successfully completed a year at the gymnasium. Some of their daughters have married into the farm families of Vasilika, and even if these farmers are among the less prosperous in the village, such a marriage conveys prestige on the girl and her family in the eyes of the shepherd community.

233 563 571 621 Finally, the shepherds are grateful for the fact that several of them are settled in the same village and that it is possible for them sometimes to herd their flocks together. They are less lonely—they have company (*parea*)—and to have companions to talk to is considered a basic good by all the people of Vasilika.

463 445 In the first chapter, the movement of itinerant traders, vendors, artisans, and professionals into Vasilika was mentioned. The village has no resident carpenters, stonemasons, saddle-makers, barbers, tailors, or doctors; but the very existence of such specialists and the expectation that they will come from time to time, demonstrate an important characteristic of the household economy of

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an individual's or family's *filotimo* would be considered severely damaged if they stole from a stranger to whom hospitality had been offered; in fact, such thefts are very rare in any Greek village. Within Vasilika itself, there was some petty filching now and then, but it did not occur on the scale one would have expected from the frequent references to theft and thieving in conversation.

The inhospitality of people in other places was a frequent topic of conversation at the homes of those celebrating name days. A man could always raise a laugh by describing the ludicrously meager food and drink provided at a wedding or name day celebration he had attended at another village. Usually in response to any questions about the occurrence in Vasilika of deviant behavior, or of some form of discord, or of some moral transgression, the villagers began by making a general statement of denial. Such things happened in other villages, they would say, but not in Vasilika.

It would seem from the foregoing that Vasilika's population did, indeed, identify itself with the village as an entity. Vasilika is their *patridha*, and it must be thought to have good qualities, I believe, because the village's qualities reflect on its inhabitants both in their status as individuals and as families. Pride in the village, then, may be an extension of pride in oneself or one's family, and the functional consequences for village-wide enterprises of the existence of such pride depend on the strength of the competing sources of satisfaction.

In Vasilika, since farms may be maintained by the labor of the elementary family with only periodic requirements for a larger labor force, since sons and daughters leave the village and yet maintain relationships with those still in Vasilika, and since individuals can expect to give and to receive protection from their families, the forces leading toward either independence or family solidarity would appear to be strong enough to leave little energy for village-centered activities as a method of augmenting self-esteem. Nevertheless, the village as an entity constitutes a permanent potential source of satisfaction for its inhabitants, and now and then, under certain circumstances, the village itself becomes the primary object of loyalty for its population and commands some sacrifice. The boundary dispute with Parori was such an occasion for Vasilika. Moreover, any individual can, if he wishes, use his energies when he occupies an official position to gain improvements for the village as a means of enhancing his own self-esteem and of gaining the respect of the villagers, as long as he does not do so at the expense of his own children. The people of Vasilika are entirely willing to enjoy and to speak proudly of the electricity, or the piped water, or the better roads in Vasilika, once they have obtained them, even if they are not always willing to work together to achieve the improvements.

But Vasilika, as a village, must compete with another focus of loyalty for its inhabitants besides the family: Greekness itself—and the Greek nation as a political entity. The villagers' awareness of and pride in their Greekness is profound. In 1956 when we were questioning the children as to what they wanted to be when they grew up, several boys answered that they hoped God would let them grow strong and sturdy so that they could be good soldiers and go to "Fight for Cyprus." Moreover, the villagers associate certain qualities with Greek ethnicity: the desire for political independence and the willingness

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slavia and Albania come together, and a Turkish Moslem minority in Thrace. Official figures on the size of these minorities have not been published, but in all probability neither much exceeds 60,000 persons.

Greece is a small country, with a total area of slightly more than 50,000 square miles, or just about the size of the state of Illinois. It is also a poor country, lacking in any very important natural resources, short of fuel, but blessed with a magnificent climate similar to that of southern California. The country is very mountainous. Patches of fertile land, none of them very large, are separated from each other by tangles of barren hill and mountain. The main crops are wheat, grapes, olives, cotton and tobacco; and of these tobacco is by all odds the most important for foreign trade, since all the wheat and nearly all the cotton, wine and olive oil are consumed within the country, leaving only a surplus of tobacco, currants and a few other specialized agricultural products for export.

Industry is comparatively weak. Greek industrial exports have seldom been able to compete in price or quality on world markets. The Greek merchant marine, on the other hand, is one of the important fleets of the world; but many Greek-owned ships are not registered in Greece, and many of the most successful Greek shipowners do not live in the country of their birth. The reason is that Greek taxes on ships and shipowners are heavier than those levied by some other countries, and the shipowners therefore find it expedient to register their ships and take their profits elsewhere. They do, however, often recruit their crews in the home country, and thus offer a source of employment to several thousand Greeks.

Greece fought on the Allied side in both the first and second world wars, suffered German and Italian occupation between 1941 and 1944, and became a special British "sphere of influence" in political and military matters during 1944–46. Since

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1946, United States influence has replaced British, and in 1951 Greece was admitted to the NATO alliance along with her neighbor, Turkey. Greece thus belongs to the free world, yet her geographical position, along one margin of the Communist heartland of eastern Europe, creates a constant threat to the nation's security.

Ever since the second world war the Greeks have therefore had to wrestle simultaneously with the problems of poverty and of political insecurity. Both were old problems in Greek history, but the scale was new – so much so that Greek resources were by themselves quite inadequate to meet the difficulties that loomed large after 1945. Only the delivery of substantial amounts of foreign, and especially of American, aid prevented political collapse and Communist revolution in the years just after the war.

This book will try to describe the successes and failures in this struggle, and make an estimate of the prospects for ultimate success in relieving poverty and improving social stability in Greece. Before launching on an account of what has been achieved, however, something should be said about the character of Greek society, with special attention to the points of difference that divide us in the United States from the Greeks.

Life in the Villages

The fundamental fact about Greece today is that in spite of the rather rapid growth of towns and cities in recent decades, the country still remains predominantly agrarian. In 1950, according to a special agricultural census, rural families comprised 4,770,783 persons, or 63 per cent of the estimated total population of the country in that year. Some of these families supplemented their agricultural income by seasonal employment in towns or on roads or other public works, and should, perhaps, not be counted as full-time farmers.

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[Village Life]

they avoid infringing on the women's meeting place, though not as rigorously as the women avoid the men's coffee house.

Nearly all villages conform to these customs, and much else unites them in a common pattern of life. Yet there is a very important distinction to be made between hill villages and villages of the plains. The distinction is not simply one of altitude. Hill villages, by and large, are located in areas so barren that the population cannot raise enough food for its own consumption, whereas plains villages, as would be expected, normally produce a food surplus for sale.

The traveler in Greece, especially if he leaves the main roads behind and explores some of the rough byways of the land, will frequently be surprised to find quite large villages perched in the most improbable places, hiding in some mountain cleft far from any substantial area of cultivable land. Equally surprising is the fact that in some of the broadest and most fertile plains, like that of Thessaly for instance, villages are rather widely separated. Places can be found where cultivated fields extend in all directions yet no house or village can be seen. In such localities, the fields are often tilled by peasants who live miles away in a village nestling in foothills near the margin of the plain.

The reason for this anomalous distribution of population is largely historical. In Turkish times, if not before, life in the plains was difficult and dangerous. Soldiers and officials, as they passed to and fro, lived off the local inhabitants. Tax and rent collectors, too, were more attentive to the plains dwellers, whose fields might be expected to produce more wealth for the collector to seize upon. These plagues were less serious in the back country, away from the main lines of communication. As a result, humble villagers found it safer to live in the hills, leaving the plains comparatively empty. But there was little food to be found in the uplands, and the Turkish landowners of the plains often needed extra hands to help cultivate their broad acres.

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Hence a sort of symbiosis was established. A large proportion of the able-bodied men of the hill villages descended each year to the plains and worked in the fields of the Turkish landowners, then returned to their homes with wages, either in money or in kind, with which to supplement the produce of the tiny fields they had been able to carve from the mountain valleys and slopes around their homes. 361 464 166 433

Some of the hill villages developed occupational specialties,[1] sending most of their able-bodied men each year to labor as masons or carpenters wherever work was to be found. Groups of villagers sometimes walked as much as a hundred miles to and from the scene of this sort of seasonal employment. Other villages developed what might be called industrial specialties —lime burning, rug weaving, wood carving and the like – and peddled their products far and wide during the summer season. One village even developed an international trade in specially dyed red wool and cloth during the latter years of the eighteenth century, stationing agents in such cities as Vienna, Constantinople and Leipzig. The origins of the modern Greek merchant marine were similar, for sailors were easily recruited among peasant boys of the islands and coasts, who sought seasonal employment to supplement what could be produced on the family farm. 361 438 464 166 433 [505]

Another pattern of migration should be mentioned, up into the higher mountain slopes rather than down to the plains. Each summer herds of sheep and goats were sent to pasture on the high ground, where vegetation stayed green through the summer drought, and then returned to lower altitudes when the snows fell. Quite a few hill villages specialized in sheepherding, accompanying their own sheep, and sometimes sheep entrusted to them by others as well, on this annual round.

As long as the hill villages lay between two relatively unpopulated geographic regions – the plains beneath and the peaks 361 166 464 433

1 [During Turkish times - Analyst]

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

[Village Life]

361 above – these complicated arrangements worked well enough.
166 The Greek communities in the hills escaped the full rigor of
464 Turkish oppression, maintained a very considerable degree of
433 self-government, and were yet able to make a living by supplementing what they could produce in the immediate locality with what they could earn far afield.

361 Two other factors help to explain the concentration of popu-
[312] lation in the hills. One was water. Greece is a dry country in summer, and before modern well-drilling techniques were known, in many localities it was difficult or impossible to live
[164] the year around in the plains. A second factor was malaria. Until DDT came to Greece after the second world war, a very large part of the country was afflicted with chronic malaria. Hill valleys, where drainage was good, were often free of this disease when the plains were not.

361 Yet problems of water supply and the risk of malaria were
166 not enough to keep eager Greek settlers from the fat lands of
175 the plains when Turkish political control was withdrawn. On
433 the contrary, as one region after another was liberated, between 1821 and 1913, Turkish landlords and peasants left or were driven out. Land so vacated was promptly settled by Greeks, many of whom came down from hill villages, while others came from Asia Minor in 1922 and 1923, fleeing the wrath of Turkish
[563] armies. Only in western Thrace was the Turkish peasantry allowed to remain on the land in return for a guarantee from Turkey not to disturb the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople and eastern Thrace.

361 But what would happen when the Turks had been driven
464 from the scene, and the plains had been pre-empted by Greek
166 peasant communities? Clearly, this development, however sat-
178 isfying to national sentiments, spelled growing hardship for
433 those who remained behind in the ancient hill villages. A landlord with hundreds or thousands of acres might be eager to hire

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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large numbers of men to help till his ground for him; a peasant farmer, owning thirty or forty acres, needed comparatively little outside help with his crops. Moreover, as the population of the plains villages grew, farms were subdivided, and there was less and less need of outside labor. Thus the old symbiosis between hill and plain was upset as the plains came to be more densely occupied by a peasant farming population. The hillsmen, whose numbers continued to increase, had to seek new outlets.

The major outlet they discovered was emigration overseas, especially to the United States. This was, in a sense, merely a geographic extension of the familiar pattern of going away from home to seek work. Largely for this reason, many of the Greek emigrants who came to this country – mainly between 1900 and 1924 – arrived with no intention of remaining permanently in their new environment. They hoped instead to make enough money to allow them to go back home to their village, and there buy a house and some land in order to live in the traditional style of their forefathers. Many of course stayed, finding the new life overseas more satisfactory than the old one at home; but many thousands acted upon their original plans and returned. As a result, even today when an American arrives in one of the remoter and more isolated villages of Greece, it is no uncommon thing to be met by some returned migrant who spent the best years of his youth in Chicago or New York, and can produce a few words of broken English to prove it. Richer villages in the plains, on the contrary, seldom sent men overseas. As long as the family enjoyed enough land to be able to live in the simple style to which the Greek peasants were accustomed, there was no compelling motive that would lead a man to undertake such a perilous and expensive venture.

In 1924 the United States established a quota on immigration which virtually stopped the stream of Greek migration to this country. At about the same time, most of the other countries of

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Village Life]

the world that could offer an attractive chance to an impecunious peasant boy also put legal barriers in the way, so that this escape from the deteriorating position of the hill villages of Greece was rather abruptly cut off.

Within Greece, the growth of towns and a modest development of industry, which scarcely antedated the 1920's, offered an escape for a few of the surplus hands that had appeared in the hill villages. But this was by no means adequate to take care of the problem. Not only was the growth of industry and urban occupations comparatively slow, while the rate at which the peasant population grew was high, but even more important, in 1922 and 1923 Greece was compelled to accommodate more than a million refugees from Asia Minor – people who had been uprooted from their homes by the Turks as a consequence of the war between Greece and Turkey which lasted from 1920 to 1922. Many of these refugees had followed urban occupations in Asia Minor, and clustered naturally in the larger cities of Greece, where their skills and entrepreneurial energy frequently opened paths to them which were closed to the ordinary Greek peasant seeking employment away from home.

It was therefore not surprising that Greek peasants, especially those cooped up in hill villages, exhibited a growing distress and bafflement during the 1920's and 1930's, since their traditional patterns of life no longer sufficed to bring wonted results. The world depression of the 1930's hit Greece hard, and contributed to the collapse of parliamentary government in 1936, when General John Metaxas established a dictatorship. Metaxas attempted to relieve the economic problems of the country by launching an ambitious program of public works, especially road building; and the expansion of the army and gendarmerie which he carried through also afforded careers to a number of young men from poor hill villages. But this was palliative rather than cure. When the second world war came, followed by Ital-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

[Town Life]

621 Even in Athens-Piraeus this pattern is observed in many of
369 the neighborhoods into which the two cities divide. The majority of Athenians live in suburbs which date back only to 1923 and the years immediately after, when tens of thousands of refugees from Asia Minor crowded into the town. Many of these communities have a strong corporate sense of their own, and live in much the same way as the smaller provincial towns
[513] already described. In the central part of Athens, however, life pursues a rhythm more or less like that of any big European city except that here, too, the midday siesta is rigorously observed. Also, new suburbs, inhabited by professional people and employees, have in recent years grown up farther from the center of town; here little of the community spirit of the older suburbs is to be found, and life rather resembles the dormitory belt of a big American city.

369 The superabundant leisure so characteristic of village life is
517 also apparent in the towns. *Cafeneions* are numerous and nearly
275 always the sidewalk tables are well filled with men who obviously have no pressing business, if indeed they have any business at all. Street corners, curbs and squares are also occupied
[435] by the poor, who cannot afford to pay for a seat by ordering a coffee, even though a modest 2½ drachmae (7 cents) will confer title to a table for an entire morning.

369 Every considerable town has a fringe of unemployed and
• 464 semi-employed inhabitants, many of them migrants from vil-
166 lages who have come seeking some sort of job to supplement
[434] the inadequate income from their family farms. Such persons can always go back to the village if need be, where at least they can have a roof over their heads and something to eat. Even when a man has been successful in finding regular employment in a town, and makes his home there, he often continues to maintain a connection with the village from which he, or his
[602] father or grandfather, came. Family ties are very strong in

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

[Town Life]

Greece, far more so than in the United States, so that a cousin or uncle who has set himself up in town will expect to help his relatives to find a footing in town when they attempt to make the escape from the land, and will also expect to be received back into the family if dire necessity should ever compel him to abandon his town career. Family ties of this sort provide a bond between town and country, extending to the second or even the third generation.

The psychological relationship between town and country is, however, subtle and complex. A peasant regards a man who has no land as something less than a full man; at the same time, most peasants envy what they feel to be the easier, richer and more stimulating life led by townsfolk, and especially by Athenians. Town dwellers, characteristically, regard themselves as far more intelligent, better informed and more civilized than the peasants. Yet elements of peasant outlook still survive among them, particularly the burning desire to own a house and a bit of land on which to plant a grape arbor and raise flowers or a few vegetables.

In town a man's most important relations are with outsiders, while in the village, relations within the family and a circle of relatives dominate daily life. In town, people must buy and sell every day, and the market relationship is shot through with antagonism, since it appears that in any immediate situation one party's gain is the other's loss. Prolonged bargaining – typical of any purchase, even of vegetables in the street – expresses this attitude; and the chicanery and high markups generally characteristic of Greek business are a consequence of the same spirit which sees in any outsider a legitimate victim, to be fleeced if possible. In village life, where market relations are merely occasional, mutual help and cooperation within the family circle provide the matrix of daily living. To be sure, outside the family circle, Greek peasants can be just as ruthless as

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Town Life]

sions, only to remember how precious a job is to every Greek, and how impossible it is for a man to throw up a position in disgust in the hope of finding another and better one. There are, however, other factors which make the position of wage and salary earners difficult, and foster chronic discontent among them.

Wages are low, and are constantly in danger of being undercut by young men coming from the villages in search of work. Such new arrivals can often afford to work for less than a regular urban resident, for they have no homes or families to maintain, and can, in summer at least, sleep outdoors and eat very little in order to save a small sum with which to return home in the fall. As a result, a large part of the building trades, for example, is in the hands of migrant labor. Unions can do little to improve wages or working conditions when dozens of applicants seek every job that opens, and are ready, if need be, to bid against one another in order to get employment at all. Moreover, the prestige accorded to white-collar work and to immunity from manual toil obviously puts the working class at a psychological disadvantage, and builds up a sense of grievance among those condemned to labor with their hands.

Like the hill villagers, the workingmen of the towns were deeply infiltrated by Communist propaganda during the second world war. Attacks upon the rich, as traitors to the nation and oppressors of the poor, won widespread response. And indeed, the conduct of the small group of wealthy men in Greece lent some color to the accusations which Communists launched against them. Most men of property felt it more vital to safeguard their possessions than to join in any active resistance to the German and Italian authorities. Many of them exhibited the same ruthlessness against everyone beyond the family circle that most Greeks exhibit, and did so even when people were actually starving in the streets, as they were in 1941. Acts of

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[P.85]

CHAPTER 3

THE VILLAGES

Since most of the people of Greece still live in villages, peasant life constitutes something of a base level for Greek society. Pressure of population is felt first and most acutely in the villages. Peasant boys from land-hungry villages are driven to seek a livelihood in the towns, thus creating a pool of unskilled but eager labor which deeply affects the conditions of life among the urban working classes. Moreover, agricultural products are the country's major items of export. What happens in the villages therefore fixes limits upon the general prosperity and social stability of the entire national community. It follows that the best criterion by which to measure the impact of Amer-

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6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

By 1956 "everybody"
178 was using fertilizer, and yields of wheat (the principal crop
241 for which fertilizer was needed) had increased to between 125
433 and 180 okes per stremma, as against the former range of 60
[243] to 80, depending of course on weather and variations in the quality of the land.

Even before the war, the farmers of Nea Eleftherohori had shown themselves willing to try new crops. Thus in 1947 there were modest acreages in legumes, cotton and tobacco as well as
178 some vegetables. Only tobacco did well, since there was no
249 irrigation; but government regulations forbade extension of to-
433 bacco acreage, in order to maintain prices. By 1956 this restric-
[656] tion had been removed for the district in which Nea Elefthero-
[435] hori is situated, and the farmers promptly began to increase their tobacco planting. In 1947 there had been a total of 52 stremmata in tobacco; in 1955 there were 480, and in 1956 no less than 898. Tobacco has in fact become the main labor-consuming crop, and it has also become the all-important cash crop
[434] for the village. Money income has multiplied several times over
[241] with the spread of tobacco cultivation, for earlier, when wheat, raised without benefit of fertilizer, was the main crop, there was often very little left to sell after the families had supplied their own food needs.

178 A second major departure occurred in 1956. With the help
241 of a bank loan, the village planted an olive grove on 900 strem-
464 mata of rough pasture. It will take ten years for the new trees
[245] to come into full production; but when they do, Nea Elefthero-
[452] hori will have a new and valuable crop, with the special virtue of requiring labor at a season of the year when other agricultural operations are more or less at a standstill. By combining grain farming (requiring labor in the early fall for planting and in the late spring for the harvest) with tobacco raising (requiring intensive labor in the early spring and for about two months in the late summer when the leaves must be picked daily and

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957

EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

strung up to dry) and olives (harvested in the late fall and the early winter), the village will be able to distribute its labor over nearly the entire round of the year, and minimize the long seasonal idleness which was characteristic of its older grain-centered type of agriculture.

Another way of describing what has happened in Nea Eleftherohori is to say that during the past five or six years commercial agriculture has largely supplanted a primarily subsistence type of agriculture. Related to this development is a very great change in the appearance of the village and of its inhabitants. Increased money income, deriving from tobacco, has been spent, in part, for city-type clothes, which every self-respecting villager has by now acquired. In part, too, money has been used to fix up the houses, which now appear very clean and tidy. Almost all have been freshly painted or whitewashed, and several families have fenced in tidy yards where a vine trellis gives shade from the sun. On the surface, Nea Eleftherohori appears far more prosperous than Lofiscos. Apparently, a fairly high level of housekeeping has become standard in Nea Eleftherohori, and a great effort is made by almost everyone to present a good front to the neighbors.

The refugees from Asia Minor constitute a partial exception to this rule. Their houses are somewhat shabbier, their dress perceptibly poorer. The old settlers look down upon them as careless farmers and poor housekeepers. The differences are not really great, but the desire to keep ahead of the refugees has probably acted as an important spur to laggard or lazy members of the old settler group, forcing them to improve their homes and to dress better than they might otherwise have done.

Indeed, if I understood the spirit of the village correctly, the desire to maintain a status and keep a respectable front to the world has become the overriding aim of the whole community. One very important consequence is the postponement of mar-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

in 1933. Since the war the number of recorded births has never exceeded 19, and sank as low as 11 in 1953. Deaths have declined also, but not as sharply, so that the natural increase of the village population in the early 1950's ranged from 6 to 12 persons a year instead of the 30 to 40 a year of the early 1930's. This decrease is the more striking since the total population of the village grew from something like 450 at the time the basic distribution of land was made in 1927 to 875 in 1956.

Two defects are obvious in the adjustment which the people of Nea Eleftherohori are making to their straitened circumstances. In the first place, there is no certainty that the boys pursuing a secondary school education will be able to find jobs when their training is completed. In 1956, there were three or four graduates of the gymnasium living in the village, waiting for something to turn up. One of them was working as a laborer on a road gang – a fate considered a terrible indignity to an educated man, even by his peasant relatives. But I was told that so far, "sooner or later," everyone who had finished the gymnasium course had been able to get a job in town, usually in the government civil service; and the parents who were sending their boys to school seemed to have no serious doubts that in due course their sons, too, might find a government desk to sit behind. If their hopes should be betrayed, then of course the whole campaign for maintaining family standards of living will be in danger of breaking down. Bitter disillusionment and discontent may then gain ground, especially among the educated young men. This is a real danger, for even a civil service as capacious as that of Greece cannot absorb indefinitely the gymnasium graduates of many villages like Nea Eleftherohori; and, of course, the gymnasium training does not prepare the boys for anything but white-collar work.

The second defect is psychological. Long postponement of marriage through the dowry represents a drastic alteration

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

recent years, this was the one the villagers most praised, perhaps because it was the newest.

Very considerable inequalities in landholding exist within the village. As a result, some families have profited far more than others from the new prosperity. Since the Greek War of Independence (1821–30), if not before, landholdings in Old Corinth have not been disturbed by wholesale government action, of the sort characteristic in the northern part of the country. The processes of inheritance and marriage settlements, supplemented by purchase and sale of land – something almost unheard of in the northern villages – have resulted in the establishment of extremely complicated property relationships. Renting and sharecropping are both common. In addition, many fields are subject to concurrent rights held by several individuals. This situation arises when heirs have refrained from subdividing an inheritance because such division would reduce the fields to absurdly small dimensions. Instead it has long been the custom to cultivate such fields as a unit and to divide the proceeds, according to some agreed proportion, among all those who have a claim thereto. Over the generations, such concurrent rights have sometimes ramified widely; but the complications of remote family and property relationships are something Greek peasant farmers are able to keep very clear in their heads, with or without written documents.

A substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Old Corinth possess no land at all. They make a living by working for others, either for day wages or on a sharecropping basis. With the introduction of tomatoes and other vegetable crops, together with the revival of the currant market, a definite, though seasonal, shortage of labor has appeared. Substantial farmers (that is, men owning 10 to 20 acres of land) complained of not being able to find enough hands to help them cultivate their fields, even though the wages they paid in the currant fields were

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

higher than wages for unskilled labor in Athens. It is these wage rates, of course, that have attracted new settlers from the hills; but the fact that such labor is seasonal, lasting for only about four months in the year, means that families depending entirely on wage work are often in very hard straits.

The unparalleled prosperity that the years since 1953 have brought to the farmers of Corinth has been accompanied by the development of a number of nonagricultural occupations within the village. Several new stores and two new coffee houses have come into existence as well as the fancy restaurant for tourists. A number of persons also make a living as tourist guides. The richest men in the village, however, are merchants who have organized the delivery of tomatoes and other vegetables to the Athens market; they employ truck drivers, not all of whom live in the village. The two cooperatives employ, between them, a full-time, professionally trained secretary. The museum has a small staff of caretakers and curators. The village school had 210 pupils in 1956 and employed three teachers. A priest officiates in a handsome new church, which the villagers have built out of their own resources. Old Corinth, in other words, is developing into a small town, and ceasing to be a mere village. If the plan, only talked about in 1956, for establishing a small canning factory to preserve tomatoes is ever realized, the transition to a town status will become definite.

Nevertheless, from one point of view, the community has so far remained thoroughly traditional in its social organization. The substantial farmers of Old Corinth continue to adhere to age-old patterns of family life. When it comes time for their children to marry, the daughters are dowered, partly with money and partly with a share of crop land, vineyard and olive grove; and sons, similarly, inherit their portion of the parental farm. Clearly, if there are more than two children – and this is almost universally the case – the new generation will have to

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

Hill Villages

KOTTA

621 [361] Kotta is situated in the far northwestern corner of Greece, about five miles from the Albanian border, and not more than fifteen miles from the point where Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece adjoin. Flowing past the village is a small stream which [133] in due course descends to join the Aliakmon River. The valley [311] slopes are steep, and the villagers possess only 500 stremmata (125 acres) of arable soil. Much of this is thin patches on the hillsides; of good bottom land the community has less than ten acres.

722 669 [731] When I visited the village in 1947, the inhabitants were starving. Seemingly innumerable children peeped out from every house, many of them showing bloated bellies beneath motley rags that served as clothing but scarcely covered their nakedness. The village was then in the hands of the guerrillas, who had stationed a detachment of fifteen boys (the eldest was not more than eighteen) in the community. The ordinary speech [191] was Slavic, and at least some of the villagers felt that it would [619] be better for them if their village belonged to Yugoslav Macedonia. Macedonian national feeling may have played some part in this attitude, but probably the major determinant was the knowledge that conditions across the border were not quite so hard as those they faced in Greece.

The people of Kotta were, indeed, living under war conditions. [491] The Greek army had blocked the main road between Florina and Kastoria, which runs not far from the village site, and no vehicles could pass without special permits; men could still get through on foot by taking off across open country, but there was little incentive to do so. Work could not be found [464] down in the plains, and a man from Kotta, with the trace of a Slavic accent in his Greek, was courting arrest or a beating if he

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kotta

[Hill Villages]

ventured into territory controlled by the Greek army or police. Resentment against the Greek authorities was widespread, although one man in the village, in speaking to me privately, made it clear that he at least did not like to contribute to the upkeep of the guerrilla garrison that controlled the village.

The population of the village was 630 persons, of whom over 200 were under fifteen years of age. Thus there was about one fifth of an acre of agricultural land per head, land that was miserably poor to begin with. Clearly the village could not live on its agriculture; and even when it had been safe to graze sheep on the barren mountain slopes, as it was not in 1947, the village still could not begin to maintain itself on local resources. The villagers calculated that they could produce food for about four months in the year; the deficit had to be made good outside.

In prewar years two means had been found to make ends meet. The men of the village were accomplished masons, and traveled far and wide over Greece seeking work as builders. In addition, they found work in various sorts of heavy construction – road building, irrigation works and the like. But in 1947 such jobs were not to be had, at least not by men with a Slavic accent.

The second, and perhaps more important, resource was remittances from abroad. The village had begun to send men overseas, mainly to Canada and Australia, even before the first world war. During the interwar years, the migration had continued despite growing barriers to free movement. In Toronto, Canada, and in Sydney, Australia, natives of Kotta had founded regular little colonies, and the members of these emigrant groups, all of whom were related to one another in some degree, helped to finance the continued emigration. Each family expected to send at least one son overseas, and that son was in turn expected to send back enough of his earnings to keep his parents fed and clothed, and to help out his brothers and sisters who stayed home.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Cherasia

[Hill Villages]

621 Ten men in the village had come back after serving with the
669 guerrillas, and were kept under informal surveillance. Some
727 forty others had not returned, and most of these were presumed dead. Thirteen who had retreated behind the iron curtain in 1949 had, however, sent letters to their relatives. The village president, who provided these statistics, was obviously well informed on these matters and clearly believed that a major part of his duties was to keep a close watch upon leftists or suspected leftists.

166 Here, then, is a village scarcely better off than it was in 1947.
621 In spite of the expenditure of tens of thousands of dollars, de-
433 rived indirectly from American aid – indeed, *because* of such
[669] expenditure – the acute and untenable overcrowding of very poor land continues; and with it the political tensions of 1946–49 seethe, just beneath the surface. The only solution for Cherasia which seems to make any sense is to remove two thirds or more of the present population, and find land or work for them elsewhere. This has not been attempted; official policy has done just the opposite by placing barriers in the way of migration from the community.

• [464] Unfortunately, Volos, the natural outlet for the surplus population of Cherasia, was itself undergoing a first-class economic crisis in 1956.[4] The port, which is the economic heart of the

[731] 4. An earthquake which damaged many buildings in Volos rather badly
[653] in 1954 was, under the circumstances, a perverse blessing to many of the poorer families of the town. Repair and reconstruction got under way quickly, thanks to a special grant from the national budget (and assisted by a special American aid appropriation of $7 million for the purpose). This gave temporary work to many, but by 1956 this extraordinary source
[288] of employment had dwindled. At the same time, a large textile plant in the city went on part time, and discharged a large proportion of its working force, as a result of a general crisis in the Greek textile trade. Consequently, Volos was, like Cherasia, unusually clean and tidy in 1956, and unusually depressed.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Cherasia
[Hill Villages]

city, was almost idle, so that serious unemployment was endemic in Volos, thus effectively blocking the easiest and most immediate escape for the hillsmen of Cherasia. In the Thessalian plain, villages like Lofiscos have not developed their agriculture to a level of intensity that would offer seasonal employment on a significant scale. Hence, for the time being the people of Cherasia are caught in a net scarcely of their own devising. At the same time they are stubbornly and angrily doing little or nothing to help themselves. It is not a hopeful situation, and if the general political climate of Greece should change, another guerrilla band could very likely be recruited from Cherasia without difficulty and at a moment's notice.

KARDAMILI

Kardamili lies on the sea, and can thus be described as a hill village only by looking inland, where high and barren hillsides rise abruptly from the coast, with only a small stream and a miniature delta to explain the location of the community. It is situated on the west coast of the central peninsula of the southern Peloponnese. Just to the south lies the wild and desolate country of Mani, a region where tribal organization and blood feud lasted into the twentieth century.

Kardamili raises a little wheat in the stream delta, but its major crop is olives. The rocky hillsides are covered with trees, skillfully planted in crevices and pockets of soil, many of which have been created artificially by terracing. The villagers reckon that they produce enough wheat to supply the community for about four months in the year; the rest has to be imported with money gained through the sale of olive oil.

Before the war, Kardamili added to its strictly agricultural resources by acting as a commercial center for a number of inland villages. They, too, exported olive oil, together with a few

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kardamili

[Hill Villages]

animals; and before roads were built, these villages brought their surplus on donkey-back (or on the hoof) to Kardamili, where it was put on board a small ship, and carried either to Athens or to Kalamata, the local metropolis, some thirty-five miles away on the rich Messenian plain. In addition, an oil-pressing plant was constructed in 1929 in Kardamili which employed as many as a hundred persons at the height of the season. Even when there were no olives to press, the plant kept open the year around by making soap and other products.

This was the basis upon which about 750 people were able to make a living in the village before the war. In recent years, however, the village has not prospered. The oil factory closed down permanently in 1940, depriving the village of what had been one of its most important resources. After the war, a new road, built in 1949–50, destroyed the importance of the port. Instead of bringing their olives to Kardamili on donkey-back and selling them there, the peasants of the hinterland loaded their produce directly onto trucks bound for Kalamata or Athens.

The new system was an obvious improvement on older methods of transport and marketing; but it meant that Kardamili, which for a few years between the wars had struggled toward becoming a miniature town, was compelled to sink back to a purely village status. One manifestation of this change is a decrease in population. In 1940, the village had about 750 inhabitants; in 1956 the population totaled only 512. War losses were insignificant, although guerrillas did kill two persons from the village. The whole community was forcibly evacuated to Kalamata in 1949 to prevent its exploitation by guerrilla bands that ranged even this far south. The evacuation was perhaps scarcely justified, however, since the guerrillas never again came near, and when the villagers returned in 1950 they found their houses intact.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Kardamili

[Hill Villages]

They came back to a village whose earlier means of livelihood was being undermined by new roads. As this fact became clear, emigration from the village commenced. Altogether, something like two hundred persons left the village between 1950 and 1956. Only one family went overseas, to Australia. The rest went either to Kalamata or to Athens. Among those who have remained in the village, a considerable number have undertaken seasonal migration to the Messenian plain in order to seek work with which to supplement the meager income from their olive trees in the village. The biggest single source of employment which has opened up in recent years is work in rice fields, developed in former salt marshes on the very edge of the Messenian plain. For the villagers of Kardamili these fields in Messenia have meant work and wages. Between eighty and ninety persons, both men and women, leave the village each year to help cultivate the rice fields. While working, they live in shanties or even out of doors, and return to their homes in Kardamili when work stops, or when something needs to be done on their own land.

Within the village there are variations in wealth, but no family has so much land as to need to hire labor. Indeed, the village secretary told me that the richest man in the village has only forty days' work a year on his olive trees, while nearly one third of all the village families own no land at all.

The only change that has come to the traditional agriculture of the community is the introduction of fertilizer, but few families use it. A common opinion holds that fertilizer is bad for the olive trees, and makes them short-lived by forcing an unnatural proliferation of fruit. A more sophisticated farmer told me that while the size of the fruit is increased by fertilizer, the quantity of oil is not increased in anything like the same proportion and its quality is lowered. Since the olive trees of this part of Greece are famous for the high quality of the oil they produce, which

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conditions under which they had to move. At the present time there is some kind of temporary mobility such as working in other villages or sections for wages but they return back /12/ home again. The type of land distribution obliges every farmer to stay where he is. No one is allowed to sell his land nor hire it to anyone else. As soon as he does this he loses his ownership. With the increasing population and with ever-decreasing returns from the soil the future may present us with great mobility problems of the young men.

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Kinship Groups.

Kinship group solidarity is very strong among Caucasians and less among Thracians. Due to the compound family system which has already broken down since the distribution of the land by the government, one finds neighborhoods with strong kinship ties. Next to the family is the kinship group. Intermarriage is prohibitive among these groups. The kinship group is very different from the usual type that we know. If there is a widow or orphans or aged men or women, members of the kinship group feel under sacred obligation to care for them as they would do for the members of their family.

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Historical Background.

We do not have any historical data to show us the date of the first settlers of this village but the new /13/ resettlers came in 1922. It had had three different conquerors; the Turks in 1448, the Bulgarians in 1912, and the Greeks in 1913. It also served as the headquarters of Allied armies of the First World War. The trenches that surround it and the heavy concrete fortifications show its importance as a military post. People have come and gone. Nationals changed hands of the village, but the storks still find the same trees and roofs for their nests convenient, regardless of the nationality of the inhabitants. If the storks could speak the language they would tell the people of the futility of the differentiating nationalism. Houses were torn down and new ones built,

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the minaret was replaced by the church steeple but the storks kept 621
the same nests for many generations. No one knows so well the history of the village as the storks do. Language and religious differences have done more harm to humanity than any good. Human beings of the same Creator because of language and religious differences kill each other and take turns in occupying the village.

PART II. The Family, The focus of Megali Vrisi Life.

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A functional study of the family offers the best method of understanding the complex behavior patterns operative in this institution. Moreover it is by such /14/ analysis that the significance of the family group in a culture may be determined.

The Economic Function.

The economic function of the families in Megali Vrisi community is very important and needs some consideration. Farming 241 594
is the only means of livelihood and consumes a large part of the time of men, women and children. The general procedure for gaining a livelihood has been fixed throughout centuries. Due to climatic conditions the type of crops that can be raised is limited and even some of these are prohibitive. A crop that in the past 249
brought them the largest income was opium poppies, a narcotic plant, but the League of Nations has prohibited the sale of this product. Another product that has many times left the farmer to speculate about future prospects in price was tobacco. This crop unlike many other crops that have followed the evolutionary type of adjustment, has tended to follow independently its sharp ups and downs. Tobacco, unlike other crops, involves a great amount [435] [464]
of skilled labor and it is a product that is handled by a few manufacturing companies that tend to set the price as they please. Both of the above crops are prohibited. The government-subsidized 243
/15/ wheat has replaced everything. Regardless of the effect of 654
this policy on the land, rotation principles and social effects on the

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people. This policy of the government has created more problems for the future generations to solve than confront the people at the present. The whole family concentrates its attention on wheat raising since its market and price are definitely fixed. The harvest rush seasons has made obligatory the work of women and children. Even younger children share the burden by either bringing drinking water, caring for the infants of the family or by collecting the fallen wheat heads. It is hard to give the age at which children are expected to do their share. It all depends on how important the need of the children are.

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Work of Wives.

Throughout the ages we find that women, besides doing the household work and raising children, share in the farm work. The women of Megali Vrisi more than any other women in the civilized world have become the real beasts of burden of village life. They have to get up early in the morning, prepare breakfast and prepare food for the whole day. As a matter of fact it is an accepted principle that women are selected as to their ability for working hard, bearing children, working at the loom and having the lips closed. These are the outstanding /16/ qualities that every woman is expected to have. Women in discussing or in gossiping about girls express their opinion as the outstanding quality of a girl, how tight her lips are, and the amount of time she spends at the loom. It is up to the parents to look up a girl for their son either within the village or from the neighboring villages. The son has to consent to what parents decide in this matter. In many instances it happens that the young man meets his wife for the first time on his wedding day. There are many reasons that usually lead the parents to decide for the marriage of their son.

562 [462] [581] [521] [584]

a. Need for extra labor in the fields and at home.
b. Desire of the father and mother to have grandchildren so they can train them before they are too old.
c. The desire of the parents to have someone in the house to take care of them.

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Harvest time is the best season for the lovers to express their love to each other. It is the time for the seasonal rush work at which people help each other. Groups of /25/ people work together and when returning home late in the evening both boys and girls sing songs that they compose in which they express their interest to each other. When parents do not agree on the proposal of the son for a certain girl, the only way to get away with it is to decide to run away with the girl.

The breaking of these holy traditions the older men of the village think is due to the railroad station which is so close to the village and the influence of city life. Another important factor that has poisoned the life of their village was the labor that started coming to the village for work. During the tobacco and opium crop years when labor was needed, the village at some seasons doubled its population with the addition of foreign labor. These people brought in short dresses, hats, silk stockings, high heel shoes and European dancing. With the passing away of these crops due to depression years the labor left the village but their influence stayed behind especially among the young. The priest, the teacher, and the "Gerousia" of the village tried hard to drive them away but all in vain.

The younger generation found a better way to give a solution to their heart's desire when their parents /26/ objected. Young men will help each other in running away with their girls. A group of them will guard the road from which the girl will pass either with knives or guns. As soon as she appears they stop her and put her on the horse with her sweetheart. While the couple goes to the designated village the rest of the group give a fight to the opposing party. The young couple appear before a priest in the other village and perform the religious ceremonies. Then their return to the village is settled by the friends of the couple. Cases of this kind are increasing in Megali Vrisi. Centuries-old traditions that have enslaved the free expression of men are being torn down and the youth find himself in freedom of self expression.

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According to his expense accounts he produced 85% of food stuffs and almost all of his seed. This shows how self sufficient the farmer of Megali Vrisi is and if he raised his vegetables too, there would be very few food articles bought from the market. 241 511

This representative farmer experiencing the prosperous year of 1934 was able besides spending for construction of a stable and a well, to deposit in the bank 2,000 drs. so as to have them during the lean years. [454]

Government Subsidy of Wheat Production

During the twentieth century the governments of various countries have introduced certain methods to regulate production, consumption and export. Some of these principles have had temporary successes and some others have failed. These governmental controls have in many instances created social changes and economic difficulties. The adoption of one crop enterprise and the creation of leisure seasons due to prohibition of certain other crops have made it difficult for the farmers to fit themselves in the new scheme of life. By subsidizing the wheat crop and fixing its market price the government has persuaded the farmers to plant only /55/ wheat and neglect rotation and other crops. 241 461 [654] [435]

Wheat being a seasonal crop provides ample leisure time for the farmer and thus ample spending periods. He is unable to find anything to occupy his time for something productive and useful in his occupation. Thus many people during the winter months leave the village for outside work. The girls in most cases find work in tobacco districts and the men in road construction. The conditions under which the girls and the men work are very poor and unhealthy, many returning home with poor health. It is a big problem with one crop farming to find something to absorb the leisure time of the farmers. [464] [499] [466]

The few experiments which were conducted in cooperation with the farmers of raising irrigated alfalfa and vetch and the introduction of dairy farming threw a hopeful light on what could be done to intensify agriculture so as to absorb all the available labor. [246] [234]